WORDS OF HOPE

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WORDS OF HOPE

EDITED BY

C. A. MEANS

"THAT YE SORROW NOT, EVEN AS OTHERS WHICH HAVE NO HOPE."

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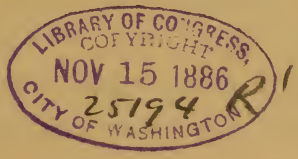

BOSTON
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY
FRANKLIN AND HAWLEY STREETS

(1886)

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PREFATORY.

THE favor with which "Golden Truths" has been received has induced the compiler to prepare another volume of selections. It has been made for those who have recently been called to stand by the graves of their loved ones; but while specially intended to meet the wants of this large class, it is believed to contain those truths which are dear to every Christian heart, — for have we not all friends who have been taken from our sight?

The first and second sections treat of those truths which so comfort the heart in its hours of deepest anguish, — "God chasteneth in Love," and "Trust in God." The third points to that

Sympathizing Friend, "who has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," and the fourth tells of the precious Fruit which Sorrow may bring forth in the soul.

The fifth section contains consolation for those whose little ones have gone home before them, and the sixth and seventh speak of Death and The Eternal Home, — those mysteries into which we pry with such eager, longing eyes, when our beloved have passed within the veil.

That these may prove Words of Hope and Consolation to many sorrowing hearts, is the earnest wish of the compiler.

C. A. MEANS.

DORCHESTER, MASS.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
God chasteneth in Love	1
Trust in God	21
The Sympathizing Friend	53
The Fruit of Sorrow	77
Children in Heaven	117
Death	159
The Eternal Home	209

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GOD CHASTENETH IN LOVE.

"God doth not leave His own!
This sorrow in their life He doth permit,
Yea, useth it
To speed His children on their heavenward way, —
He guides the winds. Faith, Hope, and Love all say,
God doth not leave his own."

GOD CHASTENETH IN LOVE.

GOD chastens thee because He loves thee! This trial comes from His own tender, loving hand, — His own tender, unchanging heart.

Has bereavement swept thy heart and desolated thy dwelling? He appointed that chamber of death; He opened that tomb because He loves thee! As it is the suffering child of the family which claims a mother's deepest affections and most tender solicitude, so hast thou at this moment embarked on thy side the tenderest love and solicitude of a chastening Heavenly Father. He loved thee into this sorrow, and He will love thee through it. There is nothing capricious in His dealings. Love is

the reason of all He does. There is no drop of wrath in that cup thou art called upon to drink. "I do believe," says Lady Powerscourt, "He has purchased these afflictions for us as well as everything else. Blessed be His name, it is a part of His covenant to visit us with the rod." What says our adorable Lord himself? The words were spoken, not when He was on earth, a sojourner in a sorrowing world, but when enthroned amid the glories of heaven: "*As many as I love I rebuke and chasten.*"

Believer, rejoice in the thought that the rod, the chastening rod, is in the hands of the living, loving Saviour, who died for thee! Tribulation is the King's Highway, and yet that highway is paved with love. As some flowers before shedding their fragrance require to be pressed, so does thy God see meet to bruise thee. As some birds are said to sing their sweetest notes when the thorn pierces their bosom, so does He appoint affliction to lacerate, that thou mayst be driven to the wing, singing, in thy upward soaring, "My heart is

fixed, O God, my heart is fixed!" "Those," says the heavenly Leighton, "He means to make the most resplendent He hath oftenest His tools upon." "Our troubles," says another, "seem in His Word to be ever in His mind. Perhaps half the commands and half the promises He gives us there are given us as *troubled* men."

Be it ours to say, "Lord, I will love Thee, not only despite of Thy rod, but because of Thy rod." I will rush into the very arms that are chastising me! When Thy voice calls, as to Abraham of old, to prepare for bitter trial, be it mine to respond, with bounding heart, "Here am I!" and to read in the bow which spans my darkest cloud, "*He chastens* BECAUSE he loves!"

MACDUFF.

GOD liveth ever!
Wherefore, Soul, despair thou never!
Our God is good; in every place
His love is known, His help is found;
His mighty arm and tender grace
Bring good from ills that hem us round.

Easier than we think can He
Turn to joy our agony.
Soul, remember, 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, Soul, despair thou never!
Say, shall He slumber, shall He sleep,
Who gave the eye its power to see?
Shall He not hear His children weep,
Who made the ear so wondrously?
God is God; He sees and hears
All their troubles, all their tears.
Soul, forget not, 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, Soul, despair thou never!
Scarce canst thou bear thy cross? Then fly
To Him where only rest is sweet;
Thy God is great, His mercy nigh,
His strength upholds the tottering feet.
Trust Him, for His grace is sure;
Ever doth His truth endure;

Soul, forget not, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, Soul, despair thou never!
Those whom the thoughtless world forsakes,
Who stand bewildered with their woe,
God gently to His bosom takes,
And bids them all His fulness know.
In thy sorrow's swelling flood,
Own His hand who seeks thy good.
Soul, forget not, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, Soul, despair thou never!
What though thou tread, with bleeding feet,
A thorny path of grief and gloom?
Thy God will choose the way most meet
To lead thee heavenwards, lead thee home;
For this life's long night of sadness
He will give thee peace and gladness.
Soul, forget not, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

ZIHN. 1682.

WE should see not only the hand of God, but the hand of our Heavenly Father, full of mercy and loving kindness, in all that befalls us, whether afflictive or otherwise; and, therefore, should believe it to be best for us because it is His will.

Our own knowledge is so very small, and our strength less, that we should not for a moment think of taking the general conduct of our affairs out of His hands; shall we then wish to alter any particular instance of His doing, because it gives us present pain, and we cannot see the precise reason for it? It is His doing, therefore it must be right; and, if it be painful, He meant that it should be. It may very well be mysterious, for His thoughts and ways are incomparably above ours. We must be as wise as God, or God as limited in comprehension as ourselves, before we can understand all the reasons of His providence; but we ought to be sure that He is as faithful in mercy as He is sovereign in ruling.

"Clouds and darkness are round about Him;" but "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne." There is the ground of our confidence, and there should be the source of our comfort.

A landsman at sea understands little how a vessel is worked; he sees her often heading almost back from her course, making many strange and contrary traverses, — sometimes stripped of her canvas when all to him seems fair; sometimes strong sails set upon her when the storm is driving fiercely; yet he trusts in the presiding skill, nor would dare to give, much less countermand, an order; for, in the extremity of his own ignorance, he has the comfort of knowing that the pilot knows. So, in the hour of gloom let us trust in God, for to Him the night shineth as the day; and what to us appears adverse, to Him is the guidance of our prosperity.

He would be an unfaithful physician who should spare the caustic, the probe, or the knife, because of the patient's shrinking; or

suffer the disease to triumph rather than cause a few sickening qualms, which might throw off the evil. So should we see in the very painfulness of our afflictions a proof that their severity was needed for our moral well-being, since our merciful Lord, the Good Physician, would not unmercifully afflict us.

A parent would be cruel who should suffer his child to put its little hand into the flame; or refuse it nothing that it craved, however pernicious; or suffer it to keep what it was turning to mischief against itself; or allow it the extravagance of passion unchecked by chastisement. It is the parent's office to employ superior wisdom and larger experience for the good of the child, even against its rebellious will. So, since God has assured us that He is our most merciful and faithful Father, we should readily submit to our restraints, deprivations, losses, and sufferings, as so many proofs that a wise, unerring love is dealing with us in the best manner for our profit.

The passenger thanks his pilot when the port is safely gained; the patient rewards his physician when his painful cure is effected; the grown-up man looks back with satisfaction upon the parental discipline of his youth; and, though we see not the reason of them now, we shall bless God, in heaven, and ought to bless Him on earth, for all the trials we meet along our way there.

G. W. Bethune.

FATHER! Thy faithful love,
Thy mercy wise and mild,
Sees what will blessing prove,
Or what will hurt Thy child.
And what Thy wise far-seeing
Doth for Thy children choose,
Thou bringest into being,
Nor sufferest them to lose.

Hope, then, though woes be doubled,
Hope, and be undismayed;
Let not thine heart be troubled,
Nor let it be afraid.

This prison where thou art,
Thy God will break it soon,
And flood with light thy heart
In His own blessed noon.

PAUL GERHARDT.

THERE are two inadequate ways of accounting for this mystery of sorrow. One, originating in a zeal for God's justice, represents it as invariably the chastisement of sin, or, at the least, as correction for fault. But, plainly, it is not always such. Joseph's griefs were the consequences, not of fault, but of rectitude. The integrity which, on some unknown occasion made it his duty to carry his brethren's "evil report" to their father, was the occasion of his slavery. The purity of his life was the cause of his imprisonment. Fault is only a part of the history of this great matter of sorrow. Another theory, created by zeal for God's love, represents sorrow as the exception, and happiness as the rule of life.

We are made for enjoyment, it is said; and, on the whole, there is more enjoyment than wretchedness. The common idea of Love being that which identifies it with a simple wish to confer happiness, no wonder that a feeble attempt is made to vindicate God, by a reduction of the apparent amount of pain. Unquestionably, however, love is very different from a desire to shield from pain. Eternal Love gives to painlessness a very subordinate place in comparison with excellence of character. It does not hesitate to secure man's spiritual dignity at the expense of the sacrifice of his well-being. The solution will not do. Let us look the truth in the face. "Man is born to sorrow as the sparks fly upwards." Sorrow is not an accident, occurring now and then; it is the very woof which is woven into the warp of life. God has created the nerves to agonize, and the heart to bleed; and before a man dies, almost every nerve has thrilled with pain, and every affection has been wounded. The account of life which represents it

as probation is inadequate; so is that which regards it chiefly as a system of rewards and punishments. The truest account of this mysterious existence seems to be that it is intended for the development of the soul's life, for which sorrow is indispensable. Every son of man who would attain the true end of his being must be baptized with fire. It is the law of our humanity, as that of Christ, that we must be perfected through suffering. And he who has not discerned the Divine Sacredness of Sorrow, and the profound meaning which is concealed in pain, has yet to learn what life is.

F. W. Robertson.

IT is a painful thing, that weeding work. "Every branch in me that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." The keen edge of God's pruning-knife cuts sheer through. No weak tenderness stops Him whose love seeks goodness, not comfort,

for His servants. A man's distractions are in his wealth, and perhaps fire or failure make him bankrupt; what he feels is God's sharp knife. Pleasure has dissipated his heart, and a stricken frame forbids his enjoying pleasure; shattered nerves and broken health wear out the life of life. Or, perhaps, it comes in a sharper, sadder form; the shaft of death goes home — there is heard the wail of danger in his household. And then when sickness has passed on to hopelessness, and hopelessness has passed on to death, the crushed man goes into the chamber of the dead; and there, when he shuts down the lid upon the coffin of his wife or the coffin of his child, his heart begins to tell him the meaning of all this. Thorns had been growing in his heart, and the sharp knife has been at work making room, — but by an awful desolation, — tearing up and cutting down, that the life of God in the soul may not be choked.

F. W. Robertson.

FLOW on, Thou Fountain of my joy,
Through all the wilderness!
Thou seest what will work for good,
Thou knowest how to bless.
Get Thyself glory, O my God,
Be praised in my distress!

Oh, let Thy true, refining love
Its utmost pleasure see;
And lift not up Thy faithful hand,
Whate'er my cry may be,
Till I am strong for Thy renown,
And pure for use to Thee.

I know Thine eye has weighed the path
To Thy lost creature's bliss;
No comfort could supply the need
Of grief so sore as this;
No joy could wake my heart so well
To Thy full preciousness.

Thou wast the Source of all that love
Which makes me glad no more,
And Thou hast taken to Thyself
What was Thine own before.

Thine, and mine, too, O good to give, —
O faithful to restore.

That loving spirit is withdrawn
From every shade of sin;
And I, in sympathy with her,
A holier life begin.
Yes! to her new delight in Thee,
I, Lord, can enter in.

She with Thee, wheresoe'er Thou art,
In fellowship untold!
She in Thee, living by my Bread,
My Hope, my heart's stronghold!
Oh! 'tis a song for days of grief,
Whate'er their depths unfold.

As one whose mother comforts him,
I will lift up my head;
No wound of Thine shall take the life
From words which Thou hast said;
And in the fulness of Thy truth
I *shall be* comforted.

A. L. WARING.

BEREAVED mourner! do you feel it a difficult thing, in the dark hour of sorrow, to say, "Thy will be done," from the heart, and to bow in meek submission to the appointment of your Heavenly Father? Oh, deem it not strange! It *is* hard and difficult to bid a last farewell to the loved — the cherished; hard to wander through scenes and places where you were wont to hear the voice of affection, and grasp the hand of true and tried friendship; hard to realize that never again on earth will you listen to accents which once fell so sweetly on the ear, or gaze upon that countenance which ever beamed with fond regard towards you. An eminent servant of God, now at rest in heaven, thus describes the anguish he felt in the loss of a beloved son: "I often find myself, when alone, literally crying out for him, and moved to stretch out my arms as if I could embrace him." And such, afflicted one, may be the anguish of your heart.

Still, be assured, the trying dispensation was *needful.* He, who loves you more tenderly than any earthly friend, sent it to draw your heart upwards to Himself; sent it to lead you, with child-like dependence, to trust your *all* to Him, — for joy or sorrow, — for health or sickness, — for time or eternity. He desires, by this affliction, to conform your will more and more to His, — to increase your love of holiness, and to render you, in a higher degree, its possessor, — to strengthen your faith, inflame your love, animate your hope, and, in the end, confirm your joy. Think not that, because the gloom of death surrounds you, — because your heart is now lacerated and bleeding, — the love, the tenderness, of your Heavenly Father is withdrawn. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten," is the divine assurance. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Indulge no dark, desponding thoughts. Imagine not, that because the clouds have gathered round you, the sky will never again be clear, or that the sun will never again

shine upon your pathway. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that truly love Him." In this your night of grief, He says to you, as to all His children, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord and obeyeth the voice of His servant, though he walk in darkness, and have no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God."

Oh! do not resist or struggle against your Heavenly Father, but strive to yield yourself meekly and humbly to His will; hear the rod and Him who appointed it; pray that He would hallow your trial, whatever it may be; that He would give you grace patiently and contentedly to bear what He has laid upon you, so that, day by day, you may receive the impress of the likeness of the ever Blessed Saviour, and become meet for the heavenly inheritance.

Reflect, too, that submission is pleasing in your Heavenly Father's sight. The sooner

you acquire the spirit of a child, the sooner will the cross, the trial, the suffering, be both sanctified and removed. Not that you are to try to bear with patience, in order to be free from chastisement, but because you will be doing that which is pleasing to Him; and when you do, He will enable you to "rejoice with exceeding joy." He knows the weight and duration of your sorrows and trials. He sees the end from the beginning, and the happy issue out of all your afflictions, which he has in store for you. Trust Him implicitly, submit to Him cheerfully, and you will find that all shall yet be well, — that more grace will be given you, — that the heavier the trial the larger will be the measure of strength. No sorrow has been mingled in your cup, no thorn has been scattered on your path, no grief has oppressed your spirit, but what is common to the whole family of God. The Shepherd is leading you by a circuitous path, but in the right way, to His own blessed

fold. Leave all to Him — to His faithfulness, His love, His power, His watchful, sleepless care. Let your song be —

"He led me through the wilderness,
A long and lonely way;
He soothed me with His tenderness,
And fed me day by day.
Oh, better far the wilderness
And desert way to me,
If, wandering in its loneliness,
I should be nearer Thee!"

J. A. MACKENZIE.

TRUST IN GOD.

If thou couldst *trust*, poor soul,
In Him who rules the whole,
Thou wouldst find peace and rest;
Wisdom and sight are well, but Trust is best.

A. A. Procter.

TRUST IN GOD.

A WIDOW related, in the following language, her sad, yet, in another view of it, her happy experience, to a minister who visited her: —

"My husband died, and then disease seized on my children, and they were taken one by one. In the course of a few years, I had laid those in whom my heart was bound up, in the grave. Oh, they were many, many bitter tears that I shed! The world was dark. The very voice of consolation was a pain. I could sit by the side of my friend, but could not hear him speak of my departed ones. My affliction was too deep to be shared. It seemed as if God himself had deserted me. I was alone.

The places at the table and the fireside remained, but they who filled them were gone. Oh, the loneliness, as it had been a tomb, of my chamber! How blessed was sleep! for then the dead lived again. They were all around me. My youngest child, and last, sat on my knee; she leaped up in my arms; she uttered my name with infant joyousness; and that sweet tone was as if an angel had spoken to my sad soul. But the dream vanished, and the dreary morning broke, and I waked, and prayed, — and I sought forgiveness, even while I uttered it, for my unholy prayer, — prayed that God would let me lie down in the grave, side by side with my children and husband.

"But better thoughts came. In my grief I remembered, that though my loved ones were separated from me, the same Father — the same Infinite Love — watched over them as when they were by my fireside. We were divided, but only for a season. And by degrees my grief grew calmer. But since then

my thoughts have been more in that world where they have gone than in this. I do not remember less, but I look forward and upward more. I learned the worth of prayer and reliance. Would that I could express to every mourner how the sting is taken away from the grief of one, who with a true and full heart, puts her trust in God. I can never again go into the gay world. The pleasures of this world are no longer pleasures to me. But I have trust, and hope, and confidence. I know that my Redeemer liveth. I know that God ever watches over His children. And in my desolation, this faith of heart has long enabled me to feel a different kind of pleasure indeed, but a far deeper, though more sober joy, than the pleasures of this world ever gave me, even when youth, and health, and friends all conspired to give them their keenest relish."

"You have learned in your own heart," I said, "that all trials are not evils."

It was with eyes upturned to heaven, and

gushing over with tears, — not tears of sorrow, but gratitude, — and with a radiant countenance, that she answered, in a tone so mild, so rapt, as if her heart were speaking to her God, "It has been good for me that I have been afflicted."

JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

THERE is a land where beauty cannot fade,
Nor sorrow dim the eye;
Where true love shall not droop nor be dismayed,
And none shall ever die!
Where is that land, — Oh, where?
For I would hasten there!
Tell me, — I fain would go, —
For I am wearied with a heavy woe!
The beautiful have left me all alone:
The true, the tender, from my path are gone!
Oh, guide me with thy hand,
If thou dost know the land,
For I am burdened with oppressive care,
And I am weak and fearful with despair!
Where is it? tell me, where?
Thou that art kind and gentle, tell me, where?

Friend, thou must trust in Him who trod before
The desolate paths of life;
Must bear in meekness, as He meekly bore,
Sorrow, and pain, and strife!
Think how the Son of God
These thorny paths hath trod;
Think how He longed to go,
Yet tarried out for thee the appointed woe:
Think of His weariness in places dim,
When no man comforted nor cared for Him!
Think of the blood, like sweat,
With which His brow was wet,
Yet how He prayed, unaided and alone,
In that great agony, "Thy will be done."
Friend, do not thou despair,
Christ, from His heaven of heavens will hear thy prayer!

From the German of UHLAND.

HAVE you ever seen, so as to know how dreary a spectacle it is, the trust in Heaven trampled out of a soul, instead of being strengthened by the tortures of grief? Have you ever felt in yourself, in some moment of

darkness, a passing fear that an impending sorrow would be too much for your spirit to sustain? Have you ever felt the painful and guilty doubt, whether you have been carried up to a loftier plane of life, and holier states, by your past afflictions?

The first demand of the soul, under such an ordeal, is to realize that its suffering has an object. We commonly think we could endure trouble with composure, if we could only see what is to be accomplished by enduring it. Why — why is it? is the question that haunts the aching breast, and disturbs its submission. We must be content to suffer, without an answer to that question. This is the trial of faith. If a full answer were to be given, there would be no room for faith. Who am I, that I should require the Infinite and Eternal One to assign me reasons for his counsel! "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," is explanation enough to my impatient curiosity. That is what God demands of faith to feel.

When the smart and the load of fresh afflictions are not upon us, we are able to feel it, perhaps, quite easily. But how, when the nerves are torn, and the separation has come; when the dead body lies in the next room, and the tones of the silenced voice yet linger in our ears, and the sense of bereavement presses in through every pore of the heart? Can we realize it then?

In such particular cases of suffering we have to fall back, I think, on some reserved fund of faith accumulated in calmer moments. On your way to your child's or your husband's burial, you are not expected to generalize, nor to reason, nor to draw philosophical deductions from a wide circle of facts. God will not be angry if you fail to see, just in that bewildered paroxysm of grief, how it is well for you to be so stricken. Yet you can say to yourself even then, in the midst of your tears, "It *is* well; somehow it is well; it must be *wise*, and right, and merciful." That will be both the trial and the triumph of faith.

And if you have noticed, looking back over your past experience, or out among your companions, that sorrow is the chief producer of human goodness on the whole, and crosses are the mightiest instruments of spiritual purity on the whole, you are held to apply that general conviction of your reason to this special instance of affliction. If it is a law that a stormy air nurses your moral vigor, you must abide by that law while the storm beats in, and the waves are high, as bravely as in sunshine and still seas.

F. D. HUNTINGTON.

THE way is long and dreary,
The path is bleak and bare;
Our feet are worn and weary,
But we will not despair.
More heavy was Thy burden,
More desolate Thy way;—
O Lamb of God! who takest
The sin of the world away,
Have mercy on us.

The snows lie thick around us,
In the dark and gloomy night;
And the tempest wails above us,
And the stars have hid their light;
But blacker was the darkness
Round Calvary's Cross that day;—
O Lamb of God! who takest
The sin of the world away,
Have mercy on us.

Our hearts are faint with sorrow
Heavy and hard to bear,
For we dread the bitter morrow,
But we will not despair:
Thou knowest all our anguish,
And Thou wilt bid it cease;—
O Lamb of God! who takest
The sin of the world away,
Give us Thy Peace.

A. A. Procter.

GET an assurance that Christ is yours, and pardon of sin yours, and Divine favor yours, and heaven yours, and the sense of this will exceedingly quiet and silence the soul under the sorest and sharpest trials a Christian can meet with in this world. He that is assured that God is his portion will never mutter nor murmur under his greatest burdens. He that can say, "Nothing shall separate me from the love of God in Christ," will be able to triumph in the midst of the greatest tribulations. He that with the spouse can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His," will bear up quietly and sweetly under the heaviest afflictions. In the time of the Marian persecution, there was a gracious woman, who being convened before bloody Bonner, then bishop of London, upon the trial of religion, he threatened her that he would take away her husband from her; saith she, "Christ is my husband." "I will take away thy child." "Christ," saith she, "is better to me

than ten sons. "I will strip thee," saith he, "of all thy outward comforts." "Yea, but Christ is mine," saith she, "and you cannot strip me of Him." The assurance that Christ was hers bore up her heart, and quieted her spirit under all. "You may take away my life," saith Basil, "but you cannot take away my comfort; my head, but not my crown; yea," said he, "had I a thousand lives, I would lay them all down for my Saviour's sake, who hath done abundantly more for me." John Ardley professed to Bonner, when he told him of burning, and how ill he could endure it, "that if he had as many lives as he had hairs on his head, he would lose them all in the fire before he would lose his Christ." Assurance will keep a man from murmuring and muttering under the sorest afflictions. Henry and John, two Augustine monks, being the first that were burnt in Germany, and Mr. Rogers, the first that was burnt in Queen Mary's days, did all rejoice in the flames. A soul that lives under the assurance of Di-

vine favor, and in its title to glory, cannot but bear up patiently and quietly under the greatest sufferings that possibly can befall it in this world.

THOMAS BROOKS. 1669.

ALL things that have been, all that are,
All things that can be dreamed;
All possible creations made,
Kept faithful, or redeemed, —

All these may draw upon Thy power,
Thy mercy may command;
And still outflows Thy silent sea,
Immutable and grand.

Oh, little heart of mine! shall pain
Or sorrow make thee moan,
When all this God is all for thee,
A Father all thine own?

FABER.

FRET not, poor soul; while doubt and fear
Disturb thy breast,
The pitying angels, who can see
How vain thy wild regret must be,
Say, Trust and Rest.

Plan not, nor scheme, but calmly wait;
His choice is best.
While blind and erring is thy sight,
His wisdom sees and judges right,
So Trust and Rest.

Strive not nor struggle; thy poor might
Can never wrest
The meanest thing to serve thy will;
All power is His alone: Be still,
And Trust and Rest.

Desire not: self-love is strong
Within thy breast;
And yet He loves thee better still;
So let Him do His loving will,
And Trust and Rest.

What dost thou fear? His wisdom reigns,
Supreme confessed;
His power is infinite; His love
Thy deepest, fondest dreams above:
So Trust and Rest.

A. A. PROCTER.

OH, my friends, we should all be contented and happy, if we did not enter upon life, making upon it so many unwarrantable claims. We demand of life enjoyment, as our right; hence we are not grateful for it when it is given us out of grace; hence, moreover, when God denies it, our froward heart thinks it is entitled to murmur. Christians, forget not, I beseech you, that you have come into this life, to the end, not that ye might enjoy it, but that in it ye might be trained for another and a better life. Now, you think it a strange thing that days of darkness should ever cross your path; but if you held fast this truth, and bore constantly in mind that you are upon the earth in order to be educated here for heaven,

ye would rather expect your present lot to be one of tribulation and suffering, according to those words of Peter, when he says, "Beloved, count it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."

Oh, how painless do all the thorns of affliction become when one views them as forming a portion of His crown of thorns; how much more easily is every burden borne which one regards as part of the cross of Christ; and the fainting soul cries "I thirst," with a less heavy heart when it knows that it is only echoing back the voice of its dying Saviour! But remember, if we would understand the mystery of the fellowship of his sufferings, it is, above all things, necessary that we love Him, for it is only love that knows how to rejoice in the blessed sympathy of suffering.

Children of affliction, ye are too feeble! Doubtless it is human for a man to seek to share his sorrow with one he loves. And, therefore, our Lord Himself had an hour

when He could say to His faithful disciples, "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death," and could ask them to watch and pray with Him. But those men were the men of the Saviour's heart, and even their sympathy He sought for only one hour. The rest of the time He spoke of His sorrow alone with His God. Oh, beloved, ye make too much of your afflictions in saying so much about them to men, and so little to God. It is because people will not learn to suffer in silence before the Lord, that one trial after another comes to many a soul, without affecting it any more than the stones of the street are affected by the sun and the rain. This is the real cause of our afflictions bearing so little fruit. You must learn to understand the meaning of these words: "Possessing the soul *in quietness before the Lord*." Do you know what Luther says? "Suffer, and be still; tell no man thy sorrow; trust in God, His help will not fail thee." This is what Scripture calls "keeping silence before God." To talk much of one's afflic-

tions to men makes one weak and unmanly; but to tell one's sorrow to Him who seeth in secret makes one strong and calm. Your fire of tribulation is like a flickering flame, which the wind drives to and fro; but carry it in secret before the Lord, and it will become a fire of sacrifice, which will peacefully ascend to heaven.

THOLUCK.

I LOVE, and love not: Lord, it breaks my heart
To love and not to love.
Thou, veiled within Thy glory, gone apart
Into Thy shrine, which is above,
Dost Thou not love me, Lord, or care
For this mine ill? —
I love thee here or there;
I will accept thy broken heart, — lie still.

Lord, it was well with me in time gone by,
That cometh not again,
When I was fresh and cheerful — who but I?
I fresh, I cheerful; worn with pain,

Now, out of sight and out of heart;
O Lord, how long? —
I watch thee as thou art;
I will accept thy fainting heart, — be strong.

"Lie still!" "Be strong!" to-day; but, Lord, to-morrow,
What of to-morrow, Lord?
Shall there be rest from toil, be truce from sorrow,
Be living green upon the sward,
Now but a barren grave to me, —
Be joy for sorrow? —
Did I not die for thee?
Do I not live for thee? leave Me to-morrow.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

WE may assert that there cannot be imagined, much less found, the darkness, in passing through which there is no promise of Scripture by which you may be cheered. We care not what it is which hath woven the darkness; we are sure that God has made provision for his people's exulting

rather than lamenting, as the gloom gathers round them and settles over them.

Let us take the case of most frequent occurrence, but of which frequency diminishes nothing of the bitterness. We mean the case of the loss of friends — the case in which death makes way into a family, and carries off one of the most beloved of its members. It is night — deep night — in a household wheresoever this occurs. When the loss is of another kind, it may admit of repair. Property may be injured ; some cherished plan may be frustrated; but industry may be again successful, and hope may fix its eye on other objects. But when those whom we love best die, there is no comfort of this sort with which we can be comforted. For a time, at least, the loss seems irreparable; so that, though the wounded sensibilities may afterwards be healed, and even turn to the living as they turned to the dead, yet, whilst the calamity is fresh, we repulse, as injurious, the thought that the void in our affections can ever be filled, and are

persuaded that the blank in the domestic group can be occupied by nothing but the hallowed memory of the buried. It is, therefore, night in the household, darkness, — a darkness that may be felt. And philosophy comes in, with its well-meant but idle endeavors, to console those who sit in this darkness. It can speak of the unavoidableness of death, of the duty of bearing with manly fortitude what cannot be escaped; of the injuriousness of excessive grief; and it may even hazard a conjecture of reunion in some world beyond the grave. Pleasure approaches with its allurements and fascinations, offering to cheat the mind into forgetfulness, and wile the heart from its sadness. But neither philosophy nor pleasure can avail anything in the chamber of death; the taper of the one is too faint for so oppressive a gloom, and the torch of the other burns sickly in so unwonted an atmosphere. Is, then, the darkness such that those whom it envelopes are incapable of being comforted? Oh, not so. There may be those amongst your-

selves who can testify that even in a night so dreary and desolate there is a source whence consolation may be drawn. The promises of Scripture are never more strikingly fulfilled than when death has made an inroad, and taken away, at a stroke, some object of deep love. Indeed, it is God's own word to the believer, "I will be with him in trouble" — as though that presence, which can never be withdrawn, then became more real and intense.

What are we to say of cases which continually present themselves to the parochial minister? He enters a house whose darkened windows proclaim that one of its inmates is stretched out a corpse. He finds that it is the fairest and dearest whom Death has made his prey, and that the blow has fallen where sure to be most deeply felt. And he is prepared for the burst of bitter sorrows. He knows that the heart, when most purified by grace, is made of feeling stuff; for grace, which removes the heart of stone, and substitutes that

of flesh, will refine rather than extinguish human sensibilities. But what words does he hear from lips whence nothing but lamentation might have been expected to issue? "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

And when, a few days after, the slow windings of the funeral procession are seen, and the minister advances to meet the train, and pours forth the rich and inspiriting words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," is it only the low murmur of suppressed anguish by which he is answered? Can he not feel that there are those in the group whose hearts bound at the magnificent announcement? and, as he looks at the mourners, does he not gather, from the uplifted eye and the moving lip, that there is one at least who is triumphing in the fulfillment of the prediction, "O Death, I will be thy plagues! O Grave, I will be thy destruction!"?

And what are we to say to these things?

what but that in the deepest darkness there can be music — music which sounds softer and sweeter than by day; and that when the instruments of human melody are broken, there is a hand which can sweep the heart-strings and wake the notes of praise. Yes, philosophy can communicate no comfort to the afflicted; it may enter where all is night; but it leaves what it found, even weeping and wailing. And pleasure may take the lyre, whose strains have often seduced and enchanted; but the worn and wearied spirit has no ear, in the gloom, for what sounded magically when a thousand lights were blazing. But religion, — faith in the promises of that God who is the Husband of the widow and the Father of the fatherless, — this can cause the sorrowing to be glad in the midst of their sorrow; for it is a description which every believer will confess borne out by experience, that God, our Maker, "giveth songs in the night."

MELVILL.

THE face which, duly as the sun,
Rose up for me with life begun,
To mark all bright hours of the day
With hourly love, is dimmed away,—
And yet my days go on — go on.

The tongue which, like a stream, could run
Smooth music from the roughest stone,
And every morning, with "Good day,"
Make each day good, is hushed away,—
And yet my days go on — go on.

The heart which, like a staff, was one
For mine to lean and rest upon,—
The strongest on the longest day,—
With steadfast love, is caught away,—
And yet my days go on — go on.

And cold before my summer's done,
And deaf in Nature's general tune,
And fallen too low for special fear,
And here, with hope no longer here,—
While the tears drop, my days go on.

The world goes whispering to its own,
"This anguish pierces to the bone;"
And tender friends go sighing round,
"What love can ever cure this wound?"
My days go on — my days go on.

The past rolls forward on the sun,
And makes all night. O dreams begun,
Not to be ended! Ended bliss,
And life that will not end in this!
My days go on — my days go on.

Breath freezes on my lips to moan;
As one alone, once not alone,
I sit and knock at Nature's door,
Heart-bare, heart-hungry, very poor,
Whose desolated days go on.

I knock, and cry, "Undone — undone!"
Is there no help, no comfort — none?
No gleaning in the wide wheat-plains,
Where others drive their loaded wains?
My vacant days go on — go on.

. . . .

A voice reproves me thereupon,
More sweet than Nature's when the drone
Of bees is sweetest, and more deep
Than when the rivers overleap
The shuddering pines, and thunder on.

God's voice, not Nature's. Night and noon
He sits upon the great white throne,
And listens for the creature's praise.
What tattle we of days and days?
The Dayspring He, whose days go on.

He reigns above, He reigns alone;
Systems burn out and leave His throne;
Fair mists of seraphs melt and fall
Around Him, changeless amid all, —
Ancient of Days, whose days go on.

He reigns below, He reigns alone,
And, having life in love foregone
Beneath the crown of sorrow-thorns,
He reigns the jealous God. Who mourns
Or rules with Him, while days go on?

By anguish which made pale the sun,
I hear Him charge His saints that none
Among His creatures, anywhere,
Blaspheme against Him with despair,
However darkly days go on.

Take from my head the thorn-wreath brown;
No mortal grief deserves that crown.
O súpreme Love! chief Misery!
The sharp regalia is for THEE,
Whose days eternally go on!

For us — whatever's undergone,
Thou knowest, willest what is done;
Grief may be joy misunderstood;
Only the good discerns the good.
I trust Thee while my days go on.

Whatever's lost, it first was won:
We will not struggle nor impugn:
Perhaps the cup was broken here,
That Heaven's new wine might show more clear.
I praise Thee while my days go on.

I praise Thee while my days go on;
I love Thee while my days go on:
Through dark and dearth, through fire and frost,
With emptied arms and treasure lost,
I thank Thee while my days go on.

And having in Thy life-depth thrown
Being and suffering (which are one),
As a child drops his pebble small
Down some deep well, and hears it fall,
Smiling, — so I. THY DAYS GO ON.

MRS. E. B. BROWNING.

THE SYMPATHIZING FRIEND.

"When Sorrow's gloomy path I tread,
And threatening clouds meet o'er my head,
I'll onward go without a fear,
If only Jesus' voice I hear:
Even then the darkness light shall be,
If *there* my Saviour meet with me."

THE SYMPATHIZING FRIEND.

HOW near and how lovely a Friend is Christ! Man needs such a Friend. The heart is formed for sympathy. In its joys, in its sorrows, in its affections, it retires ever to the innermost circle, and there, in the dear companionship of one tried friend, unbosoms itself, and gives to its emotions their utmost play. Without such a resource the heart is lonely and wretched indeed. How blessed, then, is that presentation of Christ, which places Him within that innermost circle, which enshrines Him in the very heart itself, nearer than the nearest earthly friend, and which keeps Him there unchanged, in all the fulness and tenderness of human sympathy, and

with all the strength and consolation of divine grace, when that innermost circle is made vacant, and the heart finds no outward support for its torn and bleeding tendrils. Let me then accustom myself to the thought of Christ as a present, personal Friend; let me learn to confide in Him as fully and as freely as in the dearest earthly confidant; — nay, more, to tell Him of all my wants, my temptations, my sufferings, my cares, my griefs, my infirmities; — to tell Him of these without one distrustful thought of His kind, sympathizing interest, or of His ability and His willingness to help in every time of need. Above all, let me ever keep His friendship, by avoiding whatever is displeasing to Him, and by devoting my whole heart to His service. Oh, the misery of being without such a Friend; to live in a world where all other friends must fail, where life itself must fail, and have no interest in this Almighty, Everlasting Friend!

J. P. Thompson.

GOING to the grave, to loose the bands of death, the Son of God bedews the path with tears. He takes Martha and Mary to his breast; He bears their grief and carries their sorrow, and, groaning and sobbing all the way, He supports their tottering footsteps. The Jews, moved at the scene, exclaim, "*Behold how He loved him!*" And now they are at the sepulchre; the grief of the bereaved sisters here breaks forth uncontrollably, and Jesus again groans as He carries their sorrows; He yields Himself to all the gushing sympathies of His own heart, though by a word He could, as soon He will, stay every grief. Why went the Master thus sorrowing to the grave? Why wept He then, who wept not under the cruel scourging, or along His own *via dolorosa?* Why wept He when about to raise the dead, but to assure thee, my soul, of sympathy in thy tears for those whom He will not yet give back to thee from the grave? Thou Blessed Lord, dost Thou bear my griefs

and carry my sorrows? And may I look to Thee, not only upon Calvary my Saviour from sin, but *here* in my solitary chamber, there by the new-made sepulchre, ever in my desolate heart my tearful Friend, my sympathizing Comforter? Blessed Jesus, Thou dost not chide my tears; *Thou dost bear my grief, and carry my sorrow.*

J. P. Thompson.

FORTH from the city gate,
As evening shadows lengthen o'er the plain,
And the hushed crowd in reverent silence wait,
Passed out a funeral train.

Only one mourner there,
Slowly, with feeble steps, following the dead;
In the sad travail of the soul's despair,
Bowed down her stricken head.

For him she wept forlorn,
Of care the solace, and of age the stay,
Whose silver cord was broken ere the morn
Had brightened into day.

Thus hath it ever been,—
Time, the destroyer, sweeps relentless by
When hopes are strong, and leaves of promise green,
And manhood's heart beats high.

Who comes, of stately mien,
As one with travel weary, seeking rest,
Whose aspect gentle, and whose brow serene,
Speak of a mission blest?

'Tis He, with power to save,
Who, where desponding grief his vigil kept,
Knowing all human sufferings, at the grave
Of Lazarus wept.

Thus spake He: "Weep no more!
Be still, sad heart! Be dry, ye moistened eyes!
Thus to the living I the dead restore!
Sleeper, awake, arise!"

Then, at His bidding came
To those cold lips the warm, returning breath,
Then did He kindle life's extinguished flame,
Victor o'er sin and death.

And thus He ever stands, —
Friend of the fallen, wiping all tears away,
Wherever Sorrow lifts her suppliant hands,
And Faith remains to pray.

Where'er the wretched flee,
From the rude conflict of this world distrest,
Consoling words He whispers, — "Come to Me,
And I will give you rest;"

Till, at the second birth,
He bids the woes and wrongs of ages cease,
And brings to an emancipated earth,
Judgment, and truth, and peace;

And gathers all His own
From the four winds to that eternal shore,
Where Mercy sits upon the great white throne,
And death shall be no more.

W. R. Neale.

THE sympathy of man is cheering and comforting; but "thus far shalt thou go, and no further." It is finite, limited, — often selfish. There are nameless and numberless sorrows on earth, beyond the reach of all human alleviation.

The sympathy of Jesus is alone exalted, pure, infinite, — removed from all taint of selfishness. He has Himself passed through every experience of woe. There are no depths of sorrow or anguish into which I can be plunged, but His everlasting arms are lower still.

"He was *in all points* tempted." Blessed assurance! I never can know the sorrow into which the "Man of Sorrows" cannot enter. Ah, rather in the midst of earth's most lacerating trials, let me listen to the unanswerable challenge from the lips of a suffering Saviour, "Was there ever any sorrow like unto my sorrow?" Yet He refused not to drink the cup of wrath! He shrunk not back from the

appointed cross! "He set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem;" and even when He hung upon the bitter tree, He refused the vinegar that would have assuaged the rage of thirst and mitigated physical suffering. Are we tempted at times to murmur under God's afflicting hand? "Consider Him that endured, ... lest ye be weary and faint in your minds." Shall we hesitate to bear any trial our Lord and Master sees meet to lay upon us, when we think of the infinitely weightier cross He so meekly and unrepiningly carried for us?

I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace. I commend you, above all, to the tenderness of that human sympathy which exists alone in Jesus. Angels and archangels, never having had sorrow, cannot *sympathize*. The glorious Being before whom they cast their crowns can, for sorrow tracked His footsteps from the manger to the grave.

We never can understand the depth and preciousness of His sympathy until we come

to need it. "I have had a deep, a very deep wound," says Lady Powerscourt ; "the trial has been very severe ; but how should I have known Him as a brother born for adversity without it? He has gone through every class in our wilderness-school. He seems intent to fill up every gap love has been forced to make. One of His errands from heaven was to 'bind up the broken-hearted.' Let your trial only endear Him to you more and more. Though earthly ties have been severing, He still 'lives and loves.'" "She was," said good old Philip Henry, when writing of Lady Puleston, who died in 1658, "she was the best friend I had on earth, but my Friend in heaven is still where He was, and He will never leave me nor forsake me."

MACDUFF.

THE secret pangs I could not tell
To dearest friend, *Thou* knowest well;
They claim Thy gracious heart;
Thou dost remove with tender care,
Or sweetly give me strength to bear
The sanctifying smart.

Thy presence has a wondrous power;
The sharpest thorn becomes a flower,
And breathes a sweet perfume;
Whate'er looked dark and sad before,
With happy light shines silvered o'er,—
There's no such thing as gloom!

Thou knowest I have a cross to bear;
The needful stroke Thou dost not spare
To keep me near Thy side;
But when I see the chastening rod
In Thy pierced hand, my Lord, my God,
I feel so satisfied!

C. WILKINS.

"COME unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Oh, mark that, — *the heavy laden!* No matter what may be the burden, whether of sin, or of care, or of sorrow, there is rest from it in Christ. If you look to Him by faith to take away the burden of your sin, He will lighten every other load that presses upon your spirit. Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the lost, is the Comforter of the distressed. He meets the natural cry of misery, and goes out to wipe away the tears of sorrow, by the hand of His redeeming mercy. He came to bind up the broken-hearted, and to comfort those that mourn; but it is in His own way. Many have come to Him, led, as it seemed, by the mere instinctive longing after happiness, and have tried faith in the Gospel, as a last and almost hopeless experiment, after the failure of every other attempt to obtain consolation. And, oh! what an unlooked-for discovery have they made! They who had found no resting-place

in the world, and who had wandered through it in quest of some object, however insignificant, that might divert them from their sorrows, and for a moment at least remove the sense of that hopeless grief which lay dead upon the heart, find now an object which the widest desires of their soul could not grasp, and of such irresistible power as to turn the current of their feelings; — I mean the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. They who had been ready to abandon life as having no charm, and to embrace death as having no greater terror than their present affliction, now see that even in the absence of that which once threw over their existence its deepest interest, they can find something worth living for, in the pursuit of an eternal joy. While in sorrow and in desolation they went to Jesus for comfort, the Spirit, whose secret but unknown influence guided their steps, opened the eyes of their understanding to discern the path of life, and, by the aid of a hope full of immortality, to

rise above the ravages of death and the spoliations of the grave. Thus, while like Mary Magdalene they were lingering round the sepulchre, the Saviour revealed Himself to them, and they dried up their tears in the presence of their Lord. May it be so with those who shall read these pages. May you in your affliction turn to religion, that grand catholicon and panacea for the sorrows of life. You do not know, even yet, how much you will need it in the future stages of your sad and solitary journey. The friends whom the freshness of your grief has gathered round you may forget your loss much sooner than you will; and the force of their sympathy may have spent itself, long before the tide of your grief has ceased to flow. Few, very few, are the faithful friends whose tender interest is as long-lived and as deep as our tribulation. Sympathy wears out long before that which calls it into existence: and then, what can comfort you but religion?

JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

JESUS, elder Brother, hear!
To Thee I lift mine eye:
Sorrows reach Thy listening ear,
And move Thee, throned on high;
Touch Thy tender human heart,
Where our names are all engraved,
Sharers of the better part,
Though once by sin enslaved.

Jesus, elder Brother, hear!
To Thee my griefs are known:
All my sadness Thou wilt cheer,
Remembering Thine own;
Yet our sorrows we must bring,
Suppliant mourners, to Thy feet,
Craving help as from a king,
Upon his mercy-seat.

Jesus, elder Brother, hear
A bruiséd sinner's prayer!
Wash my stains, dispel my fear,
Lift off my load of care;

Fill my soul with thoughtful love,
Satan's work therein destroy;
Light my pathway from above,
And be my heaven of joy!

JAMES MACKAY.

THERE is a depth of agony and loneliness in the sorrow of bereavement, into the secrecy of which the bereaved only can enter. It touches the finest and most hidden springs of the soul. It lies fathoms deep, and seldom passes the lips. The crushed affections — the annihilated hopes — the severed ties of friendship — the grave entombing life's charm, attraction, and sweetness, — quenching the sunbeam that illumined the dreary wilderness — are griefs not always apparent, or that may be known and told, but which yet plough the deepest furrows on the brow, and silver the hair with its earliest gray. But, oh, to know that Jesus can enter into its sorrow, is touched with the feeling of this grief,

and is prepared to accompany us to the grave and weep with us there, is a solace no language can describe! Precious Jesus! must Thou feel Thy own sorrows thus to enter into ours? Was ever love like Thine?

"Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus." *That* love was the secret of His tears. He knew what a brother Lazarus had been; how like weak and clinging tendrils these sisters had entwined around him for their sunshine and support. And now that he was removed, they were torn from their stay, and lay prostrate and bleeding on the earth. And as He beheld their grief—Martha's impetuous and chiding, Mary's veiled and silent, yet both real, intense, and agonizing—*Jesus wept.* Beloved reader, the Lord is acquainted with our domestic ties, and takes an interest in each one. No act of kindness, no breach of faith, no tie tenderly cherished or rudely sundered, no duty faithfully discharged or wilfully neglected, no relation honored and sanctified, escapes His all-seeing,

approving, or condemning eye. And when death enters and sunders a domestic link, and fills the home with mourning and the heart with woe, Jesus comes and makes all grace abound, giving submission to the will, peace to the mind, and consolation to the heart. Oh, there lives not a being in the universe who can enter into our bereavements with the sympathy, the succor, and the soothing of Christ!

WINSLOW.

UNDER the shadow of thy wing abiding,
Close to a sympathizing Saviour's side,
In the sure promise of His love confiding,
Why should I shrink, though earthly ills betide?

Oh! if the soul grew strong through suffering only,
If but through trial it may reach its goal,
I will rejoice, although my way be lonely,
And all Thy waves and billows o'er me roll.

Yes — I will praise Thee! though my tears are falling
Upon the trembling harp-string as I sing;
Am I not safe — though grief my soul is thralling —
Under the shadow of my Father's wing?

R. A. R.

"I SEE the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." What a testimony is this vision of Stephen to the blessed sympathy of our Lord in all circumstances of trial and suffering! We know how compassionate He was when living on earth, but sometimes the doubt will intrude, Does He feel the same interest, and offer as constant help, now that He has exchanged earth for heaven?

There the angels worship Him; there the companies of the redeemed cast their crowns at His feet; we know not what high administrations may employ His powers. Receiving new honors, engaging, perhaps, in new works

of mercy, does He still care for us? The question is answered as we see Him, in this hour of His disciple's trial, "standing on the right hand of God," like one who has risen up to welcome an expected guest.

Who can tell how many of the "noble army of martyrs" have been strengthened by these words? More precious in their extremity this may have been than any other Scripture. In the dungeon, on the rack, at the stake amid consuming flames, they have remembered Him, waiting to receive their spirits, and so have endured triumphantly. To every suffering disciple — to those despised and persecuted, though not unto death; to those struggling, burdened, fainting; to those racked with pain, or bearing the sorrows of lingering disease; to those bereaved and lonely, whose home is darkened, whose heart is desolate, in every form and degree of grief, there is unfailing comfort here.

To all the dying who die in the Lord — as they lie so weak, friends around them so help-

less, the body, it may be, distorted like Stephen's beneath the falling stones — comes the sweet assurance that One is watching them in most tender pity, even anxious for the last hour to come, that He may transport them to glory. Thus the ascended Saviour once more appears to prove Himself the same friend, now and ever, that He was when on earth; to remove every doubt of His constant sympathy and love; to demonstrate that even at the right hand of the Majesty on high, He has no office or care which will make Him, in any hour, forgetful of our need.

J. H. Means.

A SOUND in yonder glade,
But not of fount or breeze,
A sound, but not of the whispering made
By the palm and the olive trees;
It is not the minstrel's lute,
Nor the swell of the night-bird's song,
Nor the city's hum, when all else is mute,
By echo borne along.

'Tis a voice, — the Saviour's own, —
"Woman, why weepest thou?"
She turns, and her grief is forever flown,
And the shade that dimmed her brow:
He is there, her risen Lord,
No more to know decline;
He is there, with peace in His every word,
The wept One, still divine.

"My Father's throne to share,
As King, as God, I go;
But a brother's heart will be with me there,
For my brethren left below."
The weeper is laid in dust;
Her Lord is throned on high;
But ours may be still that weeper's trust,
And ours that Lord's reply.

Mourner, 'mid nature's bloom,
Dimming its light with tears,
And captive, to whom the lone, dark room
Grows darker yet with fears,
And spirit, that like a bird,
Rests not on sea or shore, —
The voice in the olive glade once heard,
Hear ye, and weep no more.

M. J. Jewsbury.

THE FRUIT OF SORROW.

Mourners who weep! — albeit, as some have done,
Ye grope, tear-blinded, in a desert place,
And touch but tombs, — *look up!* Those tears will run
Soon, in long rivers, down the lifted face,
And leave the vision clear for stars and sun.

MRS. E. B. BROWNING.

THE FRUIT OF SORROW.

IT is familiar how bereavements, which are the storms of the soul, prepare the way for religious tranquillity. I suppose that in every parish church in the land, the majority of trusting disciples were made so under the rough handling of some kind of pain. They had to march, weeping, blinded, through the dry valley of Baca, to find it at last "a well" of living water, and going from strength to strength, to appear in Zion before God. Resignation is rest; and, to know it, the heart has to be torn by terrible separations, — writhing at the new-made grave, heavy among the ruins of fortune, broken over disappointed plans or unreturned affections. It is humili-

ating, but real. Tempests must sweep our sky, before the air is still and the summer sunshine calls up the noiseless energies of life. Ask the ministers, the church records, the secret thanksgivings that rise around the communion-table. They will tell you, as One greater than they told you long before, that crosses bring calmness, — that afflictions yield afterwards the *peaceable* fruits of righteousness; that the rough, sharp mountains, hard to climb, bring peace; and that the Sabbath temple, the Lord's great house of Rest, into which the toilsome nations flow to praise, is built upon their top.

F. D. Huntington.

GOD sends the famine into the soul — the hunger, and thirst, and the disappointment — to bring back his erring child again. Now the world fastens upon that truth, and gets out of it a triumphant sarcasm against religion. They tell us that just as the caterpillar

passes into the chrysalis, and the chrysalis into the butterfly, so profligacy passes into disgust, and disgust passes into religion. To use their own phraseology, when people become disappointed with the world, it is the last resource, they say, to turn saint. So the men of the world speak, and they think they are profoundly philosophical and concise in the account they give. The world is welcome to its very small sneer. It is the glory of our Master's gospel that it is the refuge of the broken-hearted. It is the strange mercy of our God that He does not reject the writhings of a jaded heart. Let the world curl its lip, if it will, when it sees through the causes of the prodigal's return. And if the sinner does come to God taught by this disappointment, what then? If affections crushed in early life have driven one man to God; if wrecked and ruined hopes have made another man religious; if want of success in a profession has broken the spirit; if the human life, lived out too passionately, has left a surfeit and a crav-

ing behind which end in seriousness; if one is brought by the sadness of widowed life, and another by the forced desolation of involuntary single life; if, when the mighty famine comes into the heart, and not a husk is left, not a pleasure untried, then, and not till then, the remorseful resolve is made, "I will arise and go to my Father," — well, brethren, what then? Why, this: that the history of penitence, produced as it so often is by mere disappointment, sheds only a brighter lustre round the love of Christ, who rejoices to receive such wanderers, worthless as they are, back into His bosom. Thank God, the world's sneer is true. It *is* the last resource to turn saint. Thanks to our God that when this gaudy world has ceased to charm, when the heart begins to feel its hollowness, and the world has lost its satisfying power, still all is not yet lost, if penitence and Christ remain, to still, to humble, and to soothe a heart which sin has fevered.

F. W. Robertson.

THE thorns are sharp, yet I can tread on them;
The cup is bitter, yet He makes it sweet;
My face is steadfast toward Jerusalem;
My heart remembers it.

I lift the hanging hands, the feeble knees,—
I, precious more than seven times molten gold,—
Until the day when from His storehouses
God shall bring new and old.

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,
Garment of praise for spirit of heaviness,
Although to-day I fade as doth a leaf,
I languish and grow less.

Although to-day He prunes my twigs with pain,
Yet doth His blood nourish and warm my root;
To-morrow I shall put forth buds again,
And clothe myself with fruit.

Although to-day I walk in tedious ways,—
To-day His staff is turned into a rod,—
Yet will I wait for Him the appointed days,
And stay upon my God.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

"THEY were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea;" this is the register of all Christ's chosen ones, the pledge of their initiation into that covenant, "whose promises, whose rewards, whose very beatitudes, are sufferings." *Why* does St. Paul so rejoice, so delight himself in weakness, in persecution, in affliction, but because he knows that *without these* he can attain no close intimacy with his beloved Lord? And if this be a sore lesson, is it not one for which the heart may be in some degree prepared, even by its own natural experience? Do not trials and sorrows — also, it is true, deep joys — shared between two friends, partings, dangers, above all, the having stood together in the presence of death, deepen the channel of our affection in deepening that of our existence? Are not such moments, as it were, sacramental, bringing us nearer each other in bringing us nearer to God, from whom the poor unrealities of time, *unworthy of us as they are of Him*, too much

divide us? It is often through some keen, even desolating shock, — the blasting of the breath of God's chiding, — that the deep foundations of our nature are first discovered to us. When the veil of the temple, even this poor worn garment of our humanity, is rent from the top to the bottom, we catch glimpses of the inner glory: the rocks are riven, the graves open, they who have long slept in the dust come forth, and reveal to us awful and tender secrets, of which otherwise we should have known nothing. "They who love," as says St. Chrysostom, "if it be but man, not God," will know what I mean, when I speak of joys springing out of the very heart of anguish, and holding to it by a common and inseparable life; will understand how it comes that the pale flowers which thrust themselves out of the ruins of hope, of endeavor, of affection, — yes, even out of the mournful wreck of intellect itself, — should breathe out a deep and intimate fragrance, such as the broad wealth of air and sunshine never yet gave; —

"For in things
That move past utterance, tears ope all their springs,
Nor are there in the powers that all life bears,
More true interpreters of all than tears."

It needs but little consideration to perceive that devotion, self-sacrifice, all the higher moods and energies even of natural feeling, are only possible to seasons of adversity. "Deep calleth unto deep." We need not look far into man's nature to see that its true wealth does not lie so near the surface but that the smooth grassy levels of prosperity hide riches such as only a shock can develope.

DORA GREENWELL.

WITHIN this leaf, to every eye
So little worth, doth hidden lie
Most rare and subtile fragrancy:

Wouldst thou its secret strength unbind?
Crush it, and thou shalt perfume find,
Sweet as Arabia's spicy wind.

In this dull stone, so poor, and bare
Of shape or lustre, patient care
Will find for thee a jewel rare.

But first must skilful hands essay,
With file and flint, to clear away
The film which hides its fire from day.

This leaf? this stone? It is thy heart:
It must be crushed by pain and smart,
It must be cleansed by sorrow's art,

Ere it will yield a fragrance sweet,
Ere it will shine a jewel meet,
To lay before thy dear Lord's feet.

Hymns of the Ages.

THERE are moments when the heart refuses all control, and gives itself, without reserve, to grief. It feels and even cherishes emotions which it cannot yield up to any power less than that of heaven or of time. Arguments may vainly, sometimes, forbid the tears

that flow for the affecting events of remembrance or anticipation. Arguments will not obliterate scenes whose every circumstance pierced the heart. Arguments cannot recall the victims of death. Dear affections! — the sources of felicity, the charm of life, — what pangs, too, they can cause! You have loved sensibility, you have cultivated it, and you are destined yet, I hope, to obtain many of its sweetest pleasures; but you see how much it must sometimes cost you. Contemn, as it deserves, the pride of stoicism; but still there are the most cogent reasons why sorrow should somewhere be restrained. It should acknowledge the limits imposed by judgment and the will of Heaven. Do not yield your mind to the gloomy extinction of utter despondency. It still retains the most dear and valuable interests, which require to be saved from the sacrifice. Before the present circumstances took place, the wish of friendship would have been, that you might be long happily exempted from them; *now* it is that you may gain from them

as high an improvement and a triumph as ever an excellent mind won from trial. From you an example may be expected of the manner in which a virtuous and thoughtful person has learnt to bear the melancholy events of life. Even at such a season it is not a duty to abandon the study of happiness. Do not altogether turn away from sweet Hope, with her promises and smiles. Do not refuse to believe that this dark cloud will pass away, and the heavens shine again; that happier days will compensate these hours that move in sadness. Grief will have its share, — a painful share; but grief will not have your all. There is good in existence still, — rich, various, endless, — the pursuit of which will elevate, and the attainment of which will crown you.

The most pathetic energies of consolation can be imparted by RELIGION alone, — the never-dying principle of all that is happy in the creation. The firm persuasion that all things that concern us are completely, every

moment, in the hands of our Father above, infinitely wise and merciful; that He disposes all these events in the best possible manner; and that we shall one day bless Him, amid the ardors of infinite gratitude, for even His most distressing visitations,—such a sublime persuasion will make the heart and the character sublime. It will enable you to assemble all your interests together; your wishes, your prospects, your sorrows, and the circumstances of the persons that are dear to you, and present them, in one devout offering, to the best Father, the greatest Friend; and it will assure you of being, in every scene of life, the object of His kind, perpetual care.

Permit me to add that one of the most powerful means towards preserving a vigorous tone of mind in unhappy circumstances, is to explore, with a resolute eye, the serious lessons which they teach. Events like those which you have beheld open the inmost temple of solemn truth, and throw around the very blaze of revelation. In such a school,

such a mind may make incalculable improvements. I consider a scene of death as being, to the interested parties who witness it, a kind of *sacrament*, inconceivably solemn, at which they are summoned by the voice of Heaven, to pledge themselves in vows of irreversible decision. Here then, Caroline, as at the high altar of eternity, you have been called to pronounce, if I may express it so, the *inviolable oath;* to keep forever in view the momentous value of life, and to aim at its worthiest use, its sublimest end; to spurn, with a last disdain, those foolish trifles, those frivolous vanities, which so generally, within our sight, consume life, as the locusts did Egypt; and to devote yourself, with the ardor of passion, to attain the most divine improvements of the human soul; and, in short, to hold yourself in preparation to make that interesting transition to another life, whenever you shall be claimed by the Lord of the world.

JOHN FOSTER.

"I KNOW," is all the mourner saith,
"Knowledge by suffering entereth,
And life is perfected by death;—

"I am content to touch the brink
Of pain's dark goblet, and I think
My bitter drink a wholesome drink.

"I am content to be so weak:
Put strength into the words I speak,
For I am strong in what I seek.

"I am content to be so bare
Before the archers; everywhere
My wounds being stroked by heavenly air.

"Glory to God — to God," he saith;
"Knowledge by suffering entereth,
And life is perfected by death."

THERE are two ways in which we may defeat the purposes of God in grief — by forgetting it, or by over-indulging it.

The world's way is to forget. It prescribes gayety as the remedy for woe; banishes all objects which recall the past; makes it the etiquette of feeling, even amongst near relations, to abstain from the mention of the names of the lost; gets rid of the mourning-weeds as soon as possible, — the worst of all remedies for grief. Sorrow, the discipline of the Cross, is the school for all that is highest in us. Self-knowledge, true power, all that dignifies humanity, are precluded the moment you try to merely banish grief. It is a touching truth that the Saviour refused the anodyne on the cross that would have deadened pain. He would not steep his senses in oblivion. He would not suffer one drop to trickle down the side of His Father's cup of anguish untasted.

The other way is to nurse sorrow: nay,

even our best affections may tempt us to this. It seems treason to those we have loved to be happy now. We sit beneath the cypress; we school ourselves to gloom. Romance magnifies the fidelity of the broken heart: we refuse to be comforted.

Now all this must be done by effort, generally speaking. For God has so constituted both our hearts and the world, that it is hard to prolong grief beyond a time. Say what we will, the heart has in it a surprising, nay, a startling elasticity. It cannot sustain unalterable melancholy; and beside our very pathway plants grow, healing and full of balm. It is a sullen heart that can withstand the slow but sure influences of the morning sun, the summer sky, the trees and flowers, and the soothing power of human sympathy.

We are meant to sorrow, "but not as those without hope." The rule seems to consist in being simply natural. The great thing which Christ did was to call men back to simplicity and nature; not to perverted, but original

nature. He counted it no derogation of His manhood to be seen to weep. He thought it no shame to mingle with merry crowds. He opened His heart wide to all the genial and all the mournful impressions of this manifold life of ours. And this is what we have to do: be natural. Let God, that is, let the influences of God, freely play unthwarted upon the soul. Let there be no unnatural repression; no control of feeling by mere effort. Let there be no artificial and prolonged grief, no "minstrels making a noise." Let great Nature have her way. Or, rather, feel that you are in a Father's world, and live in it with Him, frankly, in a free, fearless, childlike, and natural spirit. Then grief will do its work healthily. The heart will bleed, and stanch when it has bled enough. Do not stop the bleeding: but, also, do not open the wound afresh.

F. W. Robertson.

DO not cheat thy heart and tell her,
"Grief will pass away;
Hope for fairer times in future,
And forget to-day."
Tell her, if you will, that sorrow
Need not come in vain;
Tell her that the lesson taught her
Far outweighs the pain.

Cheat her not with the old comfort,
"Soon she will forget:"
Bitter truth, alas! but matter
Rather for regret.
Bid her not "Seek other pleasures,
Turn to other things:" —
Rather nurse her cagéd sorrow,
Till the captive sings.

Rather bid her go forth bravely,
And the stranger greet;
Not as foe, with spear and buckler,
But as dear friends meet:

Bid her with a strong clasp hold her,
By her dusky wings,
Listening for the murmured blessing
Sorrow always brings.

A. A. Procter.

I LOVE to indulge hope; for affliction is a seed-time. Since God has called you aside, has spoken so emphatically, and you have had leisure for serious meditation, do not the provisions of the gospel appear new, sufficient, and exactly suited to your case? Do you not mark that gold which the thief cannot steal? that foundation which no tempest can shake? that life over which death hath no power? and that peace which the world can neither give nor take away? Does not the religion of Jesus, so forgotten and degraded among men, stand forward now as the "one thing needful"? Does not His friendship appear now to be "that better part" which "shall not be taken away," and which alone can

help in extremities? In the wreck of human affairs, indeed, it is, that God often makes His truth appear, and causes His gospel, like a plank thrown out to the perishing mariner, to be properly known and prized. In the words of Dr. Johnson, "These are the great occasions which force the mind to take refuge in religion; when we have no help in ourselves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power? and to what hope may we not raise our eyes and hearts, when we consider that the greatest Power is the best?

"Surely there is no (truly wise) man, who, thus afflicted, does not seek succor in the gospel which has brought life and immortality to light. The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence but not *content* us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our sorrow, but cannot *assuage* it. Real alleviation of the loss

of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death; and from the assurances of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy. Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but religion only can give patience."

In health and ease, ingenious speculations may amuse and satisfy us; but when He "takes away the desire of our eyes with a stroke," our sorrows are too deep to be alleviated by the mere orator or philosopher. We even turn in disgust from him who would thus trifle with our case. We need a support which the world cannot afford. "I faint," says the wounded soul: "I want an Almighty arm to lean on now; yea, a very tender and compassionate one too;— one like that of the Son of Man. I need 'a merciful and faithful High Priest,' who, having been tempted, 'knows how to succor the tempted;' that Man of Sor-

rows, that Brother born for adversity, who, being acquainted with grief, can enter into my case, and commune with me in all the peculiarities of my distress."

CECIL.

WHEN some beloved voice, that was to you
Both sound and sweetness, faileth suddenly,
And silence, against which you dare not cry,
Aches round you like a strong disease and new —
What hope? what help? what music will undo
That silence to your sense? Not friendship's sigh,
Not reason's subtle count! Not melody
Of viols, nor of pipes that Faunus blew —
Not songs of poets, nor of nightingales,
Whose hearts leap upward through the cypress trees
To the clear moon; nor yet the spheric laws
Self-chanted; nor the angels' sweet "All hail!"
Met in the smile of God. Nay, none of these:
Speak THOU, availing Christ! — and fill this pause.

MRS. E. B. BROWNING.

DEEP grief is better let alone;
Voices to it are swords;
A silent look will soothe it more
Than tenderness of words.

But am I comfortless? Oh, no!
Jesus this pathway trod;
And deeper in my soul than grief
Art Thou, my dearest God!

FABER.

WHEN, at the Last Supper, Christ sat down with His disciples, one might have expected that in the view of the approaching hours of sorrow He would be entirely occupied with His own thoughts. But how different was the case! In that moment all His thought and care were for His own, — how He should comfort them, how He should strengthen them, — so that even John, who knew his Master so well, is struck with it, and writes, with wonder, "Having loved His

own which were in the world, He loved them *unto the end.*" This self-forgetful love He retained in the darkness of death, ay, even until He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. He knew the rare art well of forgetting His own suffering in the thought of the distress of others. Which of *us* has learned that art? We calculate and distinguish between what is ours and what our neighbor's. We do so even when God has given us a light and happy heart, while to others he has allotted sorrow, when we could well afford to take upon ourselves part of our neighbor's burden. But when our own heart is oppressed with sorrow, how few of us would then preserve a heart so large and wide that he could forget himself, and find a place in his sympathy for his neighbor's affliction.

Sorrow-laden Christians, are you sufficiently mindful of the fact that affliction has a tendency to make people egotistical and self-absorbed? Ye who have a cross of care to bear, do you not perceive that to be exclu-

sively engrossed with one's own peculiar grief narrows the heart, so that it becomes incapable of taking up into its sympathy the woes of others? Oh, be strong in the love of Jesus, and learn to forget your own distress in that of others! At all events, the affliction of your relations, of those who are your own flesh and blood, ought not surely to be foreign to your deepest sympathies; you ought to think of it as your own. Children, how often have your father and mother forgotten their own joy and sorrow in their sympathy with your sorrow; and have you not strength enough to forget yourselves in the sorrow of your parents? Yea, all of you, learn to bury and forget your own griefs and sufferings in the griefs and sufferings of others. You will do so to your own advantage. For he who seeks to bind up the wounds of others, lays, in the very act, a balm upon his own; and soft and gentle flow the tears of him who himself dries the tears from a brother's eye! Well do those widows know this, and those childless parents, who, because

they must stand alone in the world, having no one to dry their own eyes and soothe their own sorrow, have made it the work of their life to minister the balm of consolation to their fellow-men, and wipe away their tears. Christians, there is no other way of ridding yourselves of the burden of your sorrow than by burying it, and forgetting it in the griefs of others! O, Thou noble, blessed Model of self-forgetting love! Thou who didst come into the world, not to be ministered unto, but to minister! Thee will we gaze on, Thee will we love, until we learn to love our relations with a love, which, in its solicitude for them, forgets its own affliction!

THOLUCK.

"IS thy burden hard and heavy? Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden; God will bear both it and thee.

Faint and weary on the mountains, wouldst thou
sleep amidst the snow?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee, and together
both shall glow.
Art thou stricken in life's battle? many wounded
round thee moan;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsams, and that balm
shall heal thine own.

Is the heart a well left empty? None but God
its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless fountain can its ceaseless
longing still.
Is the heart a living power? Self-entwined, its
strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving, and by serving love
will grow."

O LORD! that I could waste my life for others,
With no ends of my own;
That I could pour myself into my brothers,
And live for them alone!

Such was the life Thou livedst, — self-abjuring,
Thine own pains never easing;
Our burdens bearing, our just doom enduring, —
A life without self-pleasing.

FABER.

HOW many Christians have had reason to acknowledge the blessed effect of affliction, in renewing their communion with God, and reviving their decayed devotion! Are there not many who can testify, from their own experience, that while they were prosperous, the spirit of devotion became imperceptibly more languid in their bosoms? that instead of frequently enjoying prayer as a delightful privilege, they were gradually losing their relish for it, and that when they did observe it, it was observed in a cold and formal manner? They were not sensible of the length to which they had proceeded in spiritual declension, till, by some severe stroke of affliction, they were thrown on the resources of a piety

too decayed to afford them either support or consolation, and were thus, for the first time, apprised of a danger till then unperceived.

One of the greatest benefits of severe affliction, in the case of God's people, is, that it awakens them to greater ardor and diligence in prayer; and such is the blessedness of communion with God, and such is the elevating and sanctifying effect of earnest prayer, that were affliction productive of no other benefit, this alone might well compensate for all the loss which is sustained, and all the pain which is inflicted, even by the severest dispensations of providence.

J. BUCHANAN.

THERE are some spirits which must go through a discipline analogous to that sustained by Elijah. The storm-struggle must precede the still small voice. There are minds which must be convulsed with doubt before they can repose in faith. There are hearts which

must be broken with disappointment before they can rise into hope. There are dispositions which, like Job, must have all things taken from them, before they can find all things again in God. Blessed is the man who, when the tempest has spent its fury, recognizes his Father's voice in its undertone, and bares his head and bows his knee, as Elijah did. To such spirits, generally those of a stern, rugged cast, it seems as if God had said, "In the still sunshine, and ordinary ways of life, you cannot meet Me; but like Job, in the desolation of the tempest, you shall see My Form and hear My Voice, and know that your Redeemer liveth."

F. W. Robertson.

SPEAK low to me, my Saviour, low and sweet,
From out the hallelujahs, sweet and low,
Lest I should fear and fall, and miss Thee so,
Who art not missed by any that entreat.
Speak to me as to Mary at Thy feet;
And if no precious gums my hands bestow,
Let my tears drop like amber, while I go

In reach of Thy divinest voice, complete
In humanest affection; thus, in sooth,
To lose the sense of losing! As a child,
Whose song-bird seeks the wood forevermore,
Is sung to, in its stead, by mother's mouth,
Till, sinking on her breast love-reconciled,
He sleeps the faster that he wept before.

MRS. E. B. BROWNING.

THE counsel of Lord Bacon is good: "Learn of David to leave Shimei and call upon God: He hath some great work to do, and He prepareth you for it: He would neither have you faint, nor bear this cross with a stoical resolution." Bearing it meekly, and seeing the Divine hand in it, the profit to our souls may be true and lasting; but without seeing the Divine hand in it, we shall have neither profit nor peace. We shall be either crushed or hardened by it, perhaps imbittered and exasperated, if we do not feel and acknowledge that "affliction cometh not forth of

the dust," but is sent by God. Then alone shall we be disposed to "seek unto God" in our troubles, and able to understand the words, "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore, despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: for He maketh sore, and bindeth up; He woundeth, and His hands make whole."

In order to profit by affliction, we must make it our study to turn it into a means of spiritual good. While we are passive as to the afflictions themselves, we must not be passive as to the ends which they are designed to accomplish. The corn is passive in receiving good from alternate sunshine and shower. The oak is passive in its growth amid the storms which threaten to rend it. But where mind and heart are concerned, we must not be passive. We must concern ourselves, that both the sunshine and the shower, the calm and the storm, may do us good. By our indifference and inattention, a season which is fraught with blessing may pass over us without leaving one lasting

salutary impression on our spirits; whereas, by devout thought and prayer, it might yield us a wealth of spiritual good that would make it forever memorable.

J. KENNEDY.

IN the still air the music lies unheard;
In the rough marble beauty hides unseen;
To wake the music and the beauty needs
The master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.

Great Master, touch us with Thy skilful hand;
Let not the music that is in us die:
Great Sculptor, hew and polish us, nor let,
Hidden and lost, Thy form within us lie.

Spare not the stroke; do with us as Thou wilt;
Let there be nought unfinished, broken, marred;
Complete Thy purpose, that we may become,
Thy perfect image, O our God and Lord.

BONAR.

HE who has no dear friend in the better world, who has not been called to surrender to heaven one whom he has cherished here, lacks as yet an experience that would link him to the spiritual and the eternal with the most fervent sympathies of his being. All heavenly he may be in his temper and in his life; his faith may be strong, his hope bright, his union with Christ complete, but he wants that tender and endearing sympathy with heaven that comes from having there a parent, a child, a sister, a wife, and that gives to the unseen world a home-like feeling and a present reality. He who has caught the last affectionate breathings of the departing saint, who, even as from the other side of the River of Death, has received the farewell greeting of faith, and love, and joy, has thenceforth a new experience of things spiritual and heavenly; has a vested interest in heaven, has a more assured hold upon its realities, and is a nearer partaker of its life.

The gain of such an experience, the value of such a palpable and personal interest in that world, may well mitigate, if it do not compensate, his loss. New links bind him to that great spiritual world of which he is a member, and of which he shall soon become more cognizant, when flesh and sense and all the external media of thought shall give place to the direct intuition of God and of the future state. As each relationship of life — son, brother, husband, father — opens a new experience of sympathy and affection, so does this personal affinity with some already in the world of spirits — the marriage of souls that survives the dissolution of earthly ties — bring with it a life-like experience of the unseen, the spiritual, the eternal, that binds the soul more closely to its higher destiny, and imparts to it in hopes and aspirations an exceeding gain. Why art thou burdened, O my soul, with the pain of earthly loss! Is not thy loss their gain whom thou didst love? and if their gain, is it not thy gain also, who art forever

linked to them as a partner of their blessedness?

J. P. THOMPSON.

ONE to another hear them speak,
The patient virgins wise:
"Surely He is not far to seek,"—
"All night we watch and rise."
"The days are evil, looking back,
The coming days are dim;
Yet count we not His promise slack,
But watch and wait for Him."

One with another, soul with soul,
They kindle fire from fire:
"Friends watch us who have touched the goal,"
"They urge us, come up higher;"
"With them shall rest our way-sore feet,
With them is built our home
With Christ." "They sweet, but He most sweet,
Sweeter than honey-comb."

There no more parting, no more pain,
The distant ones brought near,

The lost so long are found again,
  Long lost, but longer dear.
Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,
  Nor heart conceived that rest;
With them our good things long deferred,
  With Jesus Christ our Best.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

CHILDREN IN HEAVEN.

Oh, blest the soul, whose lips of faith can say,
In the storm lulls of grief, — "Thy will be done!"
Oh, blest the soul that trusts that Holy One
Who in His bosom bears His lambs away!

H. M. KIMBALL.

CHILDREN IN HEAVEN.

THE strength of parental love is in proportion to its duties and trials. The mother's love grows with the burden near her heart, and, forgetting all her past pains, she makes no account of future cares, for joy that her child is born into the world; the father, as he receives his offspring within his arms, is conscious of a new tie to life, of a fresh tenderness gushing from his soul, and of an intense motive for honorable exertion. The babe's helpless dependence, anxiety for its slender health, hope for its riper years, as the harvest of their present watchful zeal, increase their fondness, and bind them more closely round their precious charge.

Very bitter, then, must be a parent's anguish, if the object of all this tenderness, and nursing, and hope be torn away; its cradle-bed made vacant; its voice hushed, no more to gladden the desolate house; the many day-dreams, brightly picturing for it a life, long, honored, and happy, dissipated by sad certainty; nothing to tell of its brief being here but a little mound in the burial-place, and that inextinguishable yearning known only in a heart which has beat beneath the sweet pressure of a child gone to the tomb. It is a sorrow which may be alleviated, and, through the grace of Jesus, sanctified, but never utterly stilled while the mourner lives. Other children may be given, — the lap and the cradle again be filled, — but there is a chamber in the soul sacred to the unfading image of the early lost; and dear above every other spot of earth will be the little grave where its changed loveliness was hidden to "moulder out of sight."

But dry your tears, bereaved parents, or

turn them into floods of joy. The voice that called them away was His who said, "They belong to my kingdom." The hand that took them from you was His who once laid His benediction on the infant's head. He has set them in the midst of His admiring disciples above. They are now the darling little ones of their Heavenly Father's house. The angels who watched over their cradle-beds are now rejoicing over their immortal beauty, as lambs safely folded, where the spoiler can never come. Heed them not, who would bid you doubt; point them to the recorded censure of the Master, displeased at so unmerciful an unbelief, — "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Out of the mouth of your babe, Christ's praise is perfected in the temple on high.

G. W. Bethune.

FRIENDS of faces unknown, and a land
Unvisited over the sea,
Who tell me how lonely you stand
With a single gold curl in the hand,
Held up to be looked at by me, —

While you ask me to ponder, and say
What a father and mother can do
With the bright fellow-locks put away
Out of reach, beyond kiss, in the clay,
Where the violets press nearer than you. —

Shall I speak like a poet, or run
Into weak woman's tears for relief?
Oh, children — I never lost one;
Yet my arm 's round my own little son,
And Love knows the secret of grief.

And I feel what it must be and is,
When God draws a new angel so
Through the house of a man up to His,
With a murmur of music you miss,
And a rapture of light you forego.

How you think, staring on at the door
Where the face of your angel flashed in,
That its brightness, familiar before,
Burns off from you ever the more
For the dark of your sorrow and sin.

"God lent him and takes him," you sigh; —
Nay, there let me break with your pain:
God's generous in giving, say I,
And the thing which He gives, I deny
That He ever can take back again.

He gives what He gives: I appeal
To all who bear babes; in the hour
When the veil of the body we feel
Rent round us, — while torments reveal
The motherhood's advent in power,

And the babe cries, — has each of us known
By apocalypse, — God being there
Full in nature, — the child is our own,
Life of life, love of love, moan of moan,
Through all changes, all times, everywhere.

He's ours, and forever. Believe,
O father! — O mother, look back
To the first love's assurance. To give,
Means, with God, not to tempt or deceive,
With a cup thrust in Benjamin's sack.

He gives what He gives. Be content!
He resumes nothing given, — be sure!
God lend? Where the usurers lent
In His temple, indignant He went,
And scourged away all those impure

He lends not, but gives to the end,
As He loves to the end. If it *seem*
That He draws back a gift, comprehend
'Tis to add to it rather, — amend,
And finish it up to your dream, —

Or keep, as a mother may, toys
Too costly, though given by herself,
Till the room shall be stiller from noise,
And the children more fit for such joys,
Kept over their heads on the shelf.

So look up, friends! you who indeed
Have possessed in your house a sweet piece
Of the heaven which men strive for, must need
Be more earnest than others are, — speed
Where they loiter, persist where they cease.

You know how one angel smiles there, —
Then, courage. 'Tis easy for you
To be drawn by a single gold hair
Of that curl, from earth's storm and despair
To the safe place above us. Adieu.

MRS. E. B. BROWNING.

"ANNIE," I said, gently, "do you know where your friend is gone?"

The simple question checked her sobs, and she looked timidly in my face, but made no reply.

"Poor Annie!" I continued; "and did he indeed leave you, without telling you whither he was gone?"

"Home, sir, home," she replied; and the

accent, no less than the words, recalled to my mind the child-like old man: "he often told me that he was going home."

"True," I replied, "and he is gone home now. Do you really wish to see him again? She was silent; but the look of affection that beamed on every feature was a sufficient answer; so I continued: "And if you do see him again, Annie, where will it be?"

Her voice faltered, as she repeated the words, "At home;" and she again burst into tears.

"Yes, Annie," I said, after a short pause, "you cannot see him here, because he is gone away. He is now happy in the enjoyment of his home, and you must wait till you can go to him there. But perhaps your home is different from his. Is it so, Annie?"

"Oh, no!" she answered, with unexpected earnestness, "we are all children of the same Father, and all travel to the same home,— that is," she added, looking down, and coloring deeply, "if we are careful to keep in the path that leads to it."

"And what path is that, Annie?"

"The path of truthful obedience, and quiet faith, and holy love," was her immediate reply.

. . . . . .

Little Annie did not sorrow as those without hope; and though, perhaps, the cord of affection, that united her so closely to the old man, may have hastened her progress to the home to which he was gone, I do not think that her bereavement was the cause of her death. I had left her, with the impression that she was not long for this world. I cannot exactly describe from whence this feeling arose. It was not merely because her cheek was wan, and her complexion delicate, and her little heart seemed to beat with too eager emotion for the frail prison in which it was confined; but there was something in her voice, look, and manner, which kept reminding me of the world of spirits; as though, in all her youth and innocence, she were walking on its very borders, and her gentle form

might at any moment fade into the mist, and vanish from my view.

The more I reflected on this, the more sure I became that little Annie had lived her time, and that no sudden shock had broken prematurely the thread of life. I thought that this assurance might afford some comfort to her parents in their heavy affliction ; for Annie was an only daughter. But when I called upon them, the mother alone was at home; and I soon found that she needed no consolation which I could afford her. She had her own secret store of treasure in every word that had fallen from her darling child. I shall never forget the look with which she said to me, "Ah, sir, I understood very little of her words while she was alive; but the moment she was gone, it seemed as though a light was shining upon them from another world, and I can read them plainly now." And then, after a pause, she added, "Do you remember, sir, on the very day you were with us, how she said, 'I will go home, directly,

myself, and you shall follow me'?" I remembered it well; and she saw from my countenance that I guessed her meaning. "Yes," she continued, as, in spite of every effort to suppress it, the big tear rolled down her cheek, "it was in order that her father and myself might learn to follow her, that little Annie was taken home. He too, sir, has become, since then, an altered man."

A silent pressure of the hand was my only reply, for I felt that the afflicted mother had learnt more truly than I could teach her, the lesson which was to be gathered from the death of her child.

The Old Man's Home, by Rev. Wm. Adams.

WHEN on my ear your loss was knelled,
And tender sympathy upburst,
A little rill from memory swelled,
Which once had soothed my bitter thirst.

And I was fain to bear to you
Some portion of their mild relief,
That it might be as healing dew,
To steal some fever from your grief.

After our child's untroubled breath
Up to the Father took its way,
And on our home the shade of death,
Like a long twilight, haunting lay;

And friends came round with us to weep
Her little spirit's swift remove,
This story of the Alpine sheep
Was told to us by one we love:

"They, in the valley's sheltering care,
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,
And when the sod grows brown and bare,
The shepherd strives to make them climb

"To airy shelves of pasture green,
That hang along the mountain's side,
Where grass and flowers together lean,
And down through mists the sunbeams slide.

"But nought can tempt the timid things
The steep and rugged path to try,
Though sweet the shepherd calls and sings,
And seared below the pastures lie;

"Till in his arms the lambs he takes,
Along the dizzy verge to go,
Then, heedless of the rifts and breaks,
They follow on, o'er rock and snow.

"And in those pastures lifted fair,
More dewy soft than lowland mead,
The shepherd drops his tender care,
And sheep and lambs together feed."

This parable, by Nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south wind free,
O'er frozen brooks that float, unsheathed
From icy thraldom, to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the Good Shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the starry way,

Holding our little lamb, asleep;
And like the burden of the sea
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying, "Arise, and follow me!"

MARIA LOWELL.

THERE was once a mother, kneeling by the bedside of the little one whom she hourly expected to lose. With what eyes of passionate love had she watched every change in that beautiful face! How had her eyes pierced the heart of the physician, at his last visit, when they glared, rather than asked the question, whether there yet was hope! How had she wearied Heaven with vows, that if it would but grant— "Ah," you say, "you can imagine all that without any difficulty at all." Imagine this, too.

Overwearied with watching, she fell into a doze beside the couch of her infant, and she dreamed in a few moments, as we are wont to do, the seeming history of long years. She

thought she heard a voice from Heaven say to her, as to Hezekiah, "I have seen thy tears, I have heard thy prayers; he shall live; and yourself shall have the roll of his history presented to you." "Ah," you say, "you can imagine all that, too."

Straightway she thought she saw her sweet child in the bloom of health, innocent and playful as her fond heart could wish. Yet a little while, and she saw him in the flush of opening youth, beautiful as ever, but beautiful as a young panther, from whose eyes wild flashes and fitful passion ever and anon gleamed; and she thought how beautiful he looked even in these moods, for she was a mother. But she also thought how many tears and sorrows may be needful to temper or quench these fires! And she seemed to follow him through a rapid succession of scenes — now of troubled sunshine, now of deep gathering gloom. His sorrows were all of a common lot, but involved a sense of agony far greater than that which *she* would

have felt from his early loss; yes, greater even to her — and how much greater to him! She saw him, more than once, wrestling with pangs more agonizing than those which now threatened his infancy; she saw him involved in error, and with difficulty extricating himself; betrayed into youthful sins, and repenting with scalding tears; she saw him half ruined by transient prosperity, and scourged into tardy wisdom only by long adversity; she saw him worn and haggard with care, — his spirit crushed, and his early beauty all wan and blasted; worse still, she saw him *thrice* stricken with that very shaft which she had so dreaded to feel but once, and mourned to think that her prayers had prevailed to prevent her own sorrows only to multiply his; worst of all, she saw him, as she thought, in a darkened chamber, kneeling beside a coffin in which youth and beauty slept their last sleep: and, as it seemed, her own image stood beside him, and uttered unheeded love to a sorrow that "refused to be comforted;" and

as she gazed on that face of stony despair, she seemed to hear a voice, which said, "If thou wilt have thy floweret of earth unfold on earth, thou must not wonder at bleak winters and inclement skies. *I* would have transplanted it to a more genial clime; but *thou* wouldst not." And, with a cry of terror, she awoke.

She turned to the sleeping figure before her, and sobbing, *hoped* it was sleeping its last sleep. She listened for his breathing, — she heard none; she lifted the taper to his lips, — the flame wavered not; he had indeed passed away while she dreamed that he lived; and she rose from her knees, and was *comforted.*

"Ah," you will say, "these sorrows could *never* have been the lot of *my* sweet child." It is hard to set one's logic against a mother's love; I can only remind you, my dear cousin, that it has been the lot of thousands, whose mothers, as their little ones crowed and laughed in their arms, in childish happi-

ness, would have sworn to the same impossibility. But for *you*, — you know what they could only believe, — that it is an impossibility. Nay, I might hint at yet profounder consolation, if, indeed, there ever existed a mother who could fancy that, in the case of her *own* child, it could ever be needed. Yet *facts* sufficiently show us, that what the dreaming mother saw — errors retrieved, sins committed but repented of, and sorrows that taught wisdom — are not always seen, and that children may, in spite of all, persist in exploring the path of evil "deeper and deeper still!" With the shadow of uncertainty whether it may not be so with any child, is there no consolation in thinking that even that shadow has passed away? For aught we know, many and many a mother may hereafter hear her lost darling say, "Sweet mother, I was taken from you a *little* while, only that I might abide with you forever!"

HENRY ROGERS.

WITHIN her downy cradle there lay a little child,
And a group of hovering angels, unseen, upon her smiled;
A strife arose among them, a loving, holy strife,
Which should shed the richest blessing over the new-born life.

One breathed upon her features, and the babe in beauty grew,
With a cheek like morning blushes, and an eye of azure hue,
Till every one who saw her was thankful for the sight
Of a face so sweet and radiant with ever-fresh delight.

Another gave her accents, and a voice as musical
As a spring-bird's joyous carol, or a rippling streamlet's fall,
Till all who heard her laughing, or her words of childish grace,
Loved as much to listen to her, as to look upon her face.

Another brought from Heaven a clear and gentle
mind,
And within the lovely casket the precious gem
enshrined,
Till all who knew her wondered that God should
be so good
As to bless with such a spirit a desert world and
rude!

Thus did she grow in beauty, in melody, and
truth,
The budding of her childhood just opening into
youth;
And to our hearts yet dearer every moment than
before
She became, though we thought fondly, heart could
not love her more.

Then out spake another angel, nobler, brighter
than the rest,
As with strong arm, but tender, he caught her to
his breast:
"Ye have made her all too lovely for a child of
mortal race,
But no shade of human sorrow shall darken o'er
her face.

"Ye have tuned to gladness only the accents of
her tongue,
And no wail of human anguish shall from her
lips be wrung;
Nor shall the soul that shineth so purely from
within
Her form of earth-born frailty ever know the taint
of sin.

"Lulled in my faithful bosom, I will bear her far
away,
Where there is no sin, nor anguish, nor sorrow,
nor decay;
And mine a boon more glorious than all your
gifts shall be,
Lo! I crown her happy spirit with immortality!"
Then on his heart our darling yielded up her
gentle breath,
For the stronger, brighter angel, who loved her
best, was DEATH.

G. W. BETHUNE.

TO a lady in Brooklyn, whose daughter had suddenly died, Mrs. Browning wrote:

"I receive your letter, read it, hold it in my hands, with a sympathy deeply moved. No, we had not heard of your loss. Hearing of such things makes us silent before God. What must it be to experience them? I have suffered myself very heavy afflictions, but the affliction of the mother I have not suffered, and I shut my eyes to the image of it. Only where Christ brings His cross He brings His presence, and where He is, none are desolate, and there is no room for despair. At the darkest, you have felt a Hand through the dark, closer perhaps and tenderer than any touch dreamt of at noon. As He knows His own, so He knows how to comfort them — using sometimes the very grief itself, and straining it to the sweetness of a faith unattainable to those ignorant of any grief.

"It seems to me that a nearer insight into the spiritual world has been granted to this

generation, so that — by whatever process we have got our conviction — we no longer deal with vague abstractions, half closed, half shadowy, in thinking of departed souls. There is now something warm and still familiar in those beloved of ours, to whom we yearn out past the grave — not cold and ghostly as they seemed once, but human, sympathetic, with well-known faces. They are not lost utterly to us even on earth; a little farther off, and that is all; farther off, too, in a very low sense. Quite apart from all foolish, spiritual (so-called) literature, we find these impressions very generally diffused among theological thinkers of the most calmly reasoning order."

MRS. E. B. BROWNING.

TWO on earth, — their little feet
Glance like sunbeams round the door;
Two in heaven, whose lips repeat
Words of blessings evermore.

Two on earth, at shut of day,
Softly sink to cradled rest;
Two in heaven, more blessed than they,
Slumber on the Saviour's breast!

Two, with crowns of budding flowers,
Dance the summer skies beneath;
Two, in heaven's unfading bowers,
Wear the glory like a wreath.

Two on earth, whose merry call
Stirs my heart to gladness now;
Two in heaven, whose kisses fall,
Through the silence, on my brow.

Two on earth, — oh, day by day,
Kneeling at my Father's throne,
Thus with pleading heart I pray,
"Shepherd, make my lambs Thy own."

Two, within that sweeter home,
Have no need of earthly prayer;
There, with angel-songs, they roam
Through the pastures green and fair.

Oft I gaze, with tearful eyes,
Where the churchyard daisies blow;
Oft my prayers are only sighs,
Yearning for my children so.

Yet I know the Shepherd's hand
Led them home in tender love;
Mine is sure a blesséd band,
Two on earth and two above.

EMILY C. HUNTINGDON.

LUTHER was called to part with Magdalen at the age of fourteen. She was a most endearing child, and united the firmness and perseverance of the father, with the gentleness and delicacy of the mother. When she grew very ill, Luther said, "Dearly do I love her! but O my God, if it be Thy will to take her hence, I resign her to Thee without a murmur."

He then approached the bed, and said to her, "My dear little daughter, my beloved

Magdalen, you would willingly remain with your earthly father; but if God calls you, you will also willingly go to your Heavenly Father."

She replied, "Yes, dear father; it is as God pleases."

"Dear little girl," he exclaimed, "oh, how I love her! The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

He then took the Bible, and read to her the passage in Isaiah: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

He then said, "My daughter, enter thou into thy resting-place in peace."

She turned her dying eyes towards him, and said, with touching simplicity, "Yes, father."

The night preceding her death, Catharine, worn out with watching, reclined her head on the sick bed, and slept. When she awoke,

she appeared much agitated; and, as soon as Philip Melancthon arrived, she hastened to him and told him her dream.

"I saw two young men, who seemed to be clad in robes of light, enter the room. I pointed to Magdalen, who lay quietly sleeping, and made a sign to them not to disturb her; but they said they came to conduct her to the bridal ceremony."

Melancthon was much moved, and afterwards said to his wife, "These were holy angels that Catharine saw in her dream; and they will conduct the virgin to her bridal in the celestial kingdom."

When her last moments were near, she raised her eyes tenderly to her parents, and begged them not to weep for her. "I go," said she, "to my Father in heaven;" and a sweet smile irradiated her dying countenance. Luther threw himself upon his knees, weeping bitterly, and fervently prayed God to spare her to them. In a few moments she expired in the arms of her father. Catharine,

unequal to repressing the agony of her sorrow, was at a little distance, perhaps unable to witness the last long-drawn breath. When the scene was closed, Luther repeated fervently, "The will of God be done! yes, she has gone to her Father in heaven." Philip Melancthon, who, with his wife, was present, said, "Parental love is an image of the Divine love, impressed on the hearts of men; God does not love the beings He has created less than parents love their children."

When they were about putting the child into the coffin, the father said, "Dear little Magdalen, I see thee now lifeless, but thou wilt shine in the heavens as a star! I am joyous in spirit, but in the flesh most sorrowful. It is wonderful to realize that she is happy, — better taken care of, — and yet to be so sad."

Then turning to her mother, who was bitterly weeping, he said, "Dear Catharine, remember where she has gone; — ah! she has made a blessed exchange. The heart bleeds,

without doubt, — it is natural that it should; but the spirit, the immortal spirit, rejoices. Happy are those who die young; children do not doubt — they believe; with them all is trust; they fall asleep."

When the funeral took place, and the people were assembled to convey the body to its last home, some friends said they sympathized with him in his affliction. "Be not sorrowful for me," he replied, "I have sent a saint to heaven. Oh, may we all die such a death! Gladly would I accept it now!"

To his friend Justus Jonas, he soon after wrote the following letter: —

"*September* 23, 1542.

"I doubt not thou hast heard of the birth of my little Magdalen into the kingdom of Christ. My wife and I ought only to think of rendering thanks for her happy transition and peaceful end, — for by it she has escaped the power of the flesh, the world, the Turks, and the devil; yet nature is strong,

and I cannot support this event without tears and groans, or, to speak more truly, without a broken heart. On my very soul are engraved the looks, the words, the gestures — during her life, and on the bed of death — of my obedient, my loving child! Even the death of Christ (and what are all deaths in comparison with that?) cannot turn away my thoughts from hers as it ought. She was, as thou knowest, lovely in her character, and full of tenderness."

LUTHER'S, *Christmas Tree.*

MY children! my children! they clustered all round me,
Like a rampart, which sorrow could never break through;
Each change in their beautiful lives only bound me
In a spell of delight, which no care could undo.

But the eldest! O Father, how glorious he was!
With the soul looking out through his fountain-like eyes!

Thou lovest Thy Sole-born! and had I not cause
The treasure Thou gavest me, Father, to prize?

But the lily-bed lies beaten down by the rain,
And the tallest is gone from the place where he grew;
My tallest! my fairest! Oh, let me complain;
For all life is unroofed, and the tempests beat through.

I murmur not, Father! my will is with Thee;
I knew at the first that my darling was Thine:
Hadst Thou taken him earlier, O Father — but see!
Thou hadst left him so long that I dreamed he was mine.

Thou hast taken the fairest, — he was fairest to me:
Thou hast taken the fairest, — 'tis always Thy way:
Thou hast taken the dearest; was he dearest to Thee?
Thou art welcome, thrice welcome; — yet woe is the day!

Thou hast honored my child by the speed of Thy choice;
Thou hast crowned him with glory, o'erwhelmed him with mirth;
He sings up in heaven, with his sweet-sounding voice,
While I, a saint's mother, am weeping on earth.

Yet, O for that voice, which is thrilling through heaven,
One moment my ears with its music to slake!
Oh, no! not for worlds would I have him re-given,
Yet I long to have back what I would not re-take.

I grudge him, and grudge him not! Father, Thou knowest
The foolish confusion of innocent sorrow;
It is thus in Thy husbandry, Saviour! Thou sowest
The grief of to-day, for the grace of to-morrow.

Go, go with thy God, with thy Saviour, my child!
Thou art His; I am His; and thy sisters are His;
But to-day thy fond mother with sorrow is wild,—
To think that her son is an angel in bliss!

Oh, forgive me, dear Saviour, on heaven's bright
shore,
Should I still in my child find a separate joy;
While I lie in the light of Thy face evermore,
May I think heaven brighter because of my boy?

F. W. Faber.

HOW earnestly did you implore the physician to search for some means of healing the disease, and relieving the pain of your precious sufferer! How did you pray God to bless the remedies used! But the Great, the Good Physician, who healed the sick, and lame, and blind, and leprous, with His touch, — who stood beside the tomb, Conqueror of Death, the Resurrection and the Life, — has heard your prayer, and restored your little one to immortal health and beauty, bearing it, in the arms of His holy angels, to a blessed clime, where all is new and bright and serene and full of joy, that never again it might know the ills of mortal being. Very sweet

was it for you to look upon your child, laughing in your arms, or playing with its fellows on the shaded sod and among the flowers; but now it is rejoicing on its Heavenly Father's bosom, or under the Tree of Life, in the sinless, thornless, unfading paradise of the redeemed.

Would you call it back to the sick bed, the uncertain life, the certain death, which must await it here? Would you replace the crown encircling its brow by wrinkles and gray hairs? hush its glad songs for the sighing, the groaning, the moans of earth? Would you take it from the arms of God, even to your own? Would you ask that it might return, to become itself a parent, and suffer the anguish which is now tearing your heart-strings? No, Christian parent, you loved your child; you love it still too well!

G. W. Bethune.

THEY are going — only going;
Jesus called them long ago;
All the wintry time they're passing
Softly as the fallen snow.
When the violets in the spring-time
Catch the azure of the sky,
They are carried out, to slumber
Sweetly where the violets lie.

They are going — only going;
When with Summer earth is drest;
In their cold hands holding roses,
Folded to each silent breast.
When the Autumn hangs red banners
Out above the harvest sheaves,
They are going — ever going —
Thick and fast, like falling leaves.

All along the mighty ages,
All adown the solemn time,
They have taken up their homeward
March to that serener clime,

Where the watching, waiting angels
Lead them from the shadow dim,
To the brightness of His presence,
Who has called them unto Him.

They are going — only going —
Out of pain and into bliss;
Out of sad and sinful weakness
Into perfect holiness.
Snowy brows — no care shall shade them;
Bright eyes — tears shall never dim;
Rosy lips — no time shall fade them;
Jesus called them unto Him.

Little hearts forever stainless, —
Little hands as pure as they, —
Little feet, by angels guided,
Never a forbidden way!
They are going — ever going —
Leaving many a lonely spot;
But 'tis Jesus who has called them —
Suffer, and forbid them not.

Lyra Anglicana.

WE need not too profoundly mourn when our children are removed, or, rather, however much we mourn our own loss, the bright certainty of their gain ought to lift us out of selfish grief. We can follow them, in thought, into their Father's mansions on high. To have a child in heaven is only to have our own hearts bound about with a golden cord, that is gently drawing our steps upwards, heavenwards, homewards. It is only an inducement the more for us "to run the race" and pursue the path of our pilgrimage, that we may rejoin them where loving hearts shall know no parting, and kindred souls shall dwell together forever. Angel fingers beckon us onward, angel voices encourage us in the silent hours of trial and gloom, angel smiles cheer us in the dark valley; and it is only all the sweeter to remember that some of them may be the little ones whom we have loved and given up to God. "I am a blossomless tree," sinks sadly into the loving heart that feels how much it

has lost when its babe was taken from her arms. "I am the mother of an angel," may dissipate the darkness and wipe away the tears, mingle a smile with the weeping, pour balm into the gaping wound, and reveal the silver lining of the frowning cloud.

Our Eternal Homes.

I DO not pray, "Comfort me! comfort me!"
For how should comfort be?
Oh,—O that cooing mouth—that little white head!
No; but I pray, "If it be not too late,
Open to me the gate,
That I may find my babe when I am dead.

"Show me the path. I had forgotten Thee
When I was happy and free,
Walking down here in the gladsome light o' the sun;
But now I come and mourn; oh, set my feet
In the road to Thy blest seat,
And for the rest, O God, Thy will be done."

JEAN INGELOW.

OH, when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,—
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?

SOUTHEY.

DEATH.

Thou God of Love! beneath Thy sheltering wings
We leave our holy dead,
To rest in hope! From this world's sufferings
Their souls have fled!

Oh, when our souls are burdened with the weight
Of life, and all its woes,
Let us remember them, and calmly wait
For our life's close!

DEATH.

"MARTHA said to Him, I know that my brother shall rise again, in the resurrection, at the last day. Jesus said unto her, *I* am the resurrection and the life;" and then showed what He meant, by bringing back Lazarus to life, unchanged, and as he had been before he died.

Surely, if that miracle meant anything, if these words meant anything, it meant this: that those who die in the fear of God, and in the faith of Christ, do not really taste death; that to them there is no death, but only a change of place, a change of state; that they pass at once, and instantly, into some new life, with all their powers, all their feelings,

unchanged, — purified, doubtless, from earthly stains, but still the same living, thinking, active beings, while they were here on earth. I say active. The Bible says nothing about their sleeping till the Day of Judgment, as some have fancied. Rest they may; rest they will, if they need rest. But what is the true rest? Not idleness, but peace of mind. To rest from sin, from sorrow, from fear, from doubt, from care, — this is the true rest. Above all, to rest from the worst weariness of all — knowing one's duty, and yet not being able to do it. That is true rest; the rest of God, who works forever, and yet is at rest forever; as the stars over our heads move forever, thousands of miles each day, and yet are at perfect rest, because they move orderly, harmoniously, fulfilling the law which God has given them. Perfect rest, in perfect work; that surely is the rest of blessed spirits, till the final consummation of all things, when Christ shall have made up the number of His elect.

I hope that this is so. I trust that this is so. I think our Lord's great words can mean nothing less than this. And if it be so, what comfort for us who must die? What comfort for us who have seen others die, if death be but a new birth into some higher life; if all that it changes in us is our body, — the mere shell and husk of us, — such a change as comes over the crawling caterpillar, which breaks its prison, and spreads its wings to the sun as a fair butterfly? Where is the sting of death, then, if death can sting, and poison, and corrupt nothing of us for which our friends have loved us; nothing of us with which we could do service to men or God? Where is the victory of the grave, if, so far from the grave holding us down, it frees us from the very thing which holds us down — the mortal body?

Death is not death, then, if it kills no part of us, save that which hindered us from perfect life. Death is not death, if it raises us in a moment from darkness into light, from

weakness into strength, from sinfulness into holiness. Death is not death if it brings us nearer to Christ, who is the fount of life. Death is not death, if it perfects our faith by sight, and lets us behold Him in whom we have believed. Death is not death, if it gives us to those whom we have loved and lost, for whom we have lived, for whom we long to live again. Death is not death, if it joins the child to the mother who is gone before. Death is not death, if it takes away from that mother forever all a mother's anxieties, a mother's fears, and lets her see, in the gracious countenance of her Saviour, a sure and certain pledge that those whom she has left behind are safe, — safe with Christ and in Christ, through all the chances and dangers of their mortal life. Death is not death, if it rids us of doubt and fear, of chance and change, of space and time, and all which space and time bring forth and then destroy. Death is not death; for Christ has conquered death for Himself, and for those who trust in Him.

KINGSLEY.

"BUT, Lord, I am a trouble! and I sit,
And I am lonesome, and the nights are few
That any think to come and draw a chair,
And sit in my poor place and talk a while.
Why should they come, forsooth? Only the wind
Knocks at my door; oh, long and loud it knocks;
The only thing God made that has a mind
To enter in."

Yea thus the old man spake;
These were the last words of his aged mouth.
BUT ONE DID KNOCK. One came to sup with him,—
That humble, weak, old man,—knocked at his door
In the rough pauses of the laboring wind.
I tell you that One knocked while it was dark,
Save where their foaming passion had made white
Those livid, seething billows. What He said
In that poor place, where He did talk a while,
I cannot tell: but this I am assured —
That when the neighbors came the morrow morn,

What time the wind had bated, and the sun
Shone on the old man's floor, they saw the smile
He passed away in, and they said, "He looks
As he had woke and seen the face of Christ,
And with that rapturous smile held out his arms
To come to Him!"

JEAN INGELOW.

THEY knelt in silent anguish by her bed,
And could not weep; but calmly there she lay.
All pain had left her; and the sun's last ray
Shone through upon her, warming into red
The shady curtains. In her heart she said,
"Heaven opens; I leave these and go away:
The Bridegroom calls, — shall the bride seek to stay?"
Then low upon her breast she bowed her head.
O lily-flower, O gem of priceless worth,
O dove with patient voice and patient eyes,
O fruitful vine amid a land of dearth,
O maid replete with loving purities,
Thou bowedst down thy head with friends on earth,
To raise it with the saints in Paradise.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

WHEREFORE weepest thou, sorrowing widow, by the coffin of thy husband? And thou, faithful child, on the grave of thy father, thy friend? And thou, disconsolate mother, by the bier of thy infant? What is it that they bear to the grave? Is it not merely the mortal coil? Or can spirits die and moulder away in the ground? Why fixest thou thine eyes, sore with weeping, on the earth? Ah! that which hath fled from thee, that which thy eye seeketh, is not there! Lift thine eyes to heaven, let them penetrate the boundless universe! Thy friend is there. The mysterious power which animated the dust, and which we call soul, — the same that so often smiled lovingly on thee through tender eyes, that spoke to thee from friendly lips, — now with solemn earnestness, now with joyful mirth, — it has gone to God, is with God, has entered into more glorious connections, into higher spheres of action, is more elevated, freer, happier, than thou! Why, then, turn

thine eyes upon the grave? The ashes that lie buried there were only a borrowed raiment, — did not belong to the immortal being, — were but an instrument, useful for a short time here below, now no longer needed. The soul has finished its course in this world, has fought the fight, and kept its faith. Henceforth it wears the crown of immortality. Man thyself, O mourner, and thou, also, prepare to fight the good fight. The loved one whom thou hast lost will one day advance to meet thee at the gate of eternity, to greet thee as a glorified companion, and will cry unto thee, Here also God is thy God!

O God! O Father! Thou art also my God, my Father; why, then, should I be bowed down with grief? Why weakly yield myself up before my course is finished, before I have fought the good fight to the end? O, give me strength — give me power! whatever suffering Thou mayst impose, I will bear it, for it will bring me nearer to Thee!

ZSCHOKKE.

BLESSED are ye, O glorified spirits, who have already overcome! O ye beloved of Jesus! ye saints of God! in solemn silence I will celebrate the memory of your triumph also. Ye have fought the fight; I am still wrestling with sin. Ye are rejoicing, having reached the goal; I am still weeping at my short-comings.

Blessed are ye; ye have conquered death in Jesus and with Jesus! The resurrection of the Lord became your resurrection. He has risen; He lives; and ye live with Him.

He lives! He is risen! The heavenly assurance that this gives us, that we also shall rise from the dead, quickens the wounded hearts of the disconsolate mourners who despair at their lost joys. To us also God has promised immortal life; our souls shall not be victims of the grave.

ZSCHOKKE.

OH! the hour when this material
Shall have vanished like a cloud!
When amid the wide ethereal,
All the invisible shall crowd,
And the naked soul, surrounded
With innumerous hosts of light,
Triumph in the view unbounded,
And adore the Infinite!

In what sudden, strange transition,
By what new and finer sense,
Shall she grasp the mighty vision,
And receive its influence?
Angels guard the new immortal
Through the wonder-teeming space,
To the everlasting portal,
To the spirit's resting-place.

Will she there no fond emotion,
Nought of early love retain?
Or, absorbed in pure devotion,
Will no mortal trace remain?

Can the grave those ties dissever,
With the very heartstrings twined?
Must she part, and part forever,
With the friend she leaves behind?

No; the past she still remembers;
Faith and hope surviving too,
Ever watch those sleeping embers,
Which must rise and live anew;
For the widowed, lonely spirit
Mourns till she be clothed afresh;
Longs *perfection* to inherit,
And to triumph in the flesh.

Angels, let the ransomed stranger
In your tender care be blest,
Hoping, trusting, free from danger,
Till the trumpet end her rest;
Till the trump, which shakes creation,
Through the circling heaven shall roll;
Till the day of consummation,
Till the bridal of the soul.

CONDER.

THERE is in human history an unwritten chapter, which is yet thronged with mysterious incidents, half fearfully remembered by their witnesses. All who have frequently stood beside the bed of the dying must have been thrilled with singular testimonies that the dying are conscious of the presence of other than mortal visitants.

Is it not a grand and consolatory conviction, that when Christians are passing away from their earth-work to their eternal homes, then the attenuating links that chain consciousness to time and day are melting away, one by one, and their consciousness becomes, by the gradual enfranchisement of a lingering death, more and more spiritual? Thus sinking to sleep as to earth, they are awaking to heaven; growing unmindful of the lower and outer existence, they are arousing to the inner and spiritual life; becoming blind to the clay-enveloped forms of friends standing round their failing bodies, they see already, as through a

mist, the brighter beings who are to be their everlasting companions, — some of whom may be already welcoming their coming. Their hearing waxing dim, and unconscious to the melody of beloved voices whispering in their natural ears, they can become aware of a sweeter music, sung by more exquisite voices still, of the beloved who have gone before them: in fine, dying unto earth, they are becoming alive unto heaven. Does this not fully and worthily explain the solemn scenes of thousands of death-beds? — visions of spiritual visitants ministering to the dying; resplendent light surrounding glorious beings who cast no shadow; gorgeous scenery, bright with never-fading beauty; voices thrilling in tenderness; music mysterious in harmony; the recognition of dear familiar faces, fondly loved in the bygones; or the foreknowledge which some have received of the exact moment of their departure! There are few families who have not some tale of this kind to tell, some testi-

mony to add to this proof of the contiguity of the spiritual world.

Our Eternal Homes.

IT lies around us like a cloud, —
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.

Its gentle breezes fan our cheek;
Amid our worldly cares
Its gentle voices whisper love,
And mingle with our prayers.

Sweet hearts around us throb and beat,
Sweet helping hands are stirred,
And palpitates the veil between
With breathings almost heard.

The silence — awful, sweet, and calm —
They have no power to break;
For mortal words are not for them
To utter or partake.

So thin, so soft, so sweet they glide,
  So near to press they seem,
They seem to lull us to our rest,
  And melt into our dream.

And in the hush of rest they bring
  'Tis easy now to see
How lovely and how sweet a pass
  The hour of death may be, —

To close the eye, and close the ear,
  Rapt in a trance of bliss,
And gently dream in loving arms,
  To swoon to that, — from this;

Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,
  Scarce asking where we are,
To feel all evil sink away,
  All sorrow and all care.

Sweet souls around us! watch us still;
  Press nearer to our side;
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
  With gentle helpings glide.

Let death between us be as nought,
A dried and vanished stream:
Your joy be the reality,
Our suffering life the dream.

MRS. H. B. STOWE.

BY this time, what was mortal of our dear friend has been consigned to its resting-place in darkness and silence; and I can pensively sympathize in the profound musings in which your spirit is drawn to follow the immortal part. Oh, what is the transition? Whither is that immortal essence gone? In what higher manner does it live, and know, and exert its faculties, no longer involved in the dark tabernacle of dying flesh? Our departed friend does not come to reveal it to us. But enough to know that it is a deliverance from all pains, and weakness, and fears, — a deliverance from *sin*, that most dreadful thing in the universe. And it is to be past death — to have accomplished that one amazing act which we have

yet undone before us, and are to do. It is to know what that awful and mysterious thing is, and that its pains and terrors are gone past forever. "I have died," our beloved friend says now, with exultation, "and I live to die no more! I have conquered through the blood of the Lamb."

IT will often occur as an idea nowise irrational or improbable, that perhaps the loved and departed friend, in what is, as to our perceptions, an absence entire and absolute, may not really have become a stranger. I have often thought it highly probable that the departed friends who took a warm and faithful interest, may do so still. A benevolent remembrance of us they *necessarily* have. But why not much more than that? Why should it appear improbable that they have the means of being apprised of our situation and conduct, and even our feelings; and that they maintain, in a continuance, a friendly interest for us;

watching, as it were, our progress towards the appointed moment of our passing after them through death? Some good and wise men have even maintained it as not improbable that they may be employed in kind offices for their pious survivors, in humbler coöperation with angelic agents. We cannot know it; but we may be allowed to indulge a pleasing and consolatory idea which contradicts no principle of reason and doctrine of revelation. At the very least we may feel confidently assured that they retain us so much in mind as to feel a lively interest in our final welfare, and in the anticipation of our transition to their society. The day of resurrection is to be looked forward to as the consummation of the felicity of the followers of Christ. But that event must certainly be far distant; and I sometimes wonder that religious teachers advert so little, in any distinct terms, to the state immediately after death, which inspiration has so expressly asserted to be a state of consciousness and of happiness to faithful souls.

JOHN FOSTER.

AS one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
Now bathed within the fadeless green
And holy peace of Paradise.
O, looking from some heavenly hill,
Or from the shade of saintly palms,
Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago: —
The chill weight of the winter's snow
For months upon her grave has lain:
And now, when summer south winds blow,
And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak,
The hill-side flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went,
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills

The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,
What change can reach the wealth I hold?
What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon
Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at need the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

J. G. Whittier.

TO be a believer, to have clear views, to love God, to know one's self accepted, is not enough to make one welcome, with radiant smile, the messenger of the livid wing. Many a strong man has felt his courage sink, many a bright flame has grown pale.

St. Paul, he who used to say, "To die is gain," — St. Paul in Asia, *despairing even of life*, and then saved, — glorifies God, who has delivered him from so *great a danger;* who delivers us, he adds, and in whom we trust that He will yet deliver.

In the fortress at Jerusalem, this same Paul, learning that the Jews are laying snares for him, has the governor apprised of it, that he may watch over his safety. At Cæsarea, he takes the same precaution.

In the midst of the tempest, when the ship that carries the apostle to Italy, dismasted, broken by the force of the waves, is about to fall to pieces, forsaken by its crew, Paul detains the sailors: "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."

At Rome, before Nero, on the occasion of his first trial, he writes, "And I was delivered from the mouth of the lion."

Is Paul afraid to die? Not so! But, thank God! Paul is a man. Paul has times when life seems to him sweet, his mission grand; Paul, too, has seasons when the gloomy aspect of death presents itself to his mind. Were it not so, he would no longer be one of us; we should not understand him.

The heavenly visage of a Stephen stoned to death rouses my energy; what the Lord has done for him, He may do for me also. But if the hosts of the redeemed presented only such lofty shapes as these, — not any pallor, not any shadow, — I should feel myself, as it were, a stranger in so holy a company; a secret voice would whisper to me, "Art thou indeed one of them?"

Now, on the contrary, I know that one may die humbly, silently, perhaps timidly; may be more sorry for the sins committed than thankful for the pardon given, and neverthe-

less and certainly belong to Jesus. Not to all Christians are granted joyous and triumphant deaths. The most esteemed among them, — those whose great deeds have been the most widely spread by fame, whose voice has made many hearts thrill — may depart obscurely, shuddering at the vanity of all terrestrial glory, holding indeed the hand of Jesus, but trembling the while. And at the same hour, some unknown woman, some little child who lends an innocent ear to the divine promises, shall behold the heavens opened, soar away on unflagging wing, and greet their last day with hallelujahs.

MADAME DE GASPARIN.

ALONE! to land alone upon that shore!
Knowing so well we can return no more;
No voice or face of friend,
None with us to attend
Our disembarking on that awful strand,
But to arrive alone in such a land!

Alone! to land alone upon that shore!
To begin alone to live forevermore,
To have no one to teach
The manners or the speech
Of that new life, or put us at our ease; —
O that we might die in pairs or companies!

Alone? The God we know is on that shore,
The God of whose attractions we know more
Than of those who may appear
Nearest and dearest here;
Oh, is he not the life-long Friend we know
More privately than any friend below?

Alone? The God we trust is on that shore,
The Faithful One, whom we have trusted more,
In trials and in woes,
Than we have trusted those
On whom we leaned most in our earthly strife;
Oh, we shall trust Him more in that new life!

Alone? The God we love is on that shore; —
Love not enough, yet whom we love far more,
And whom we loved all through,
And with a love more true

Than other loves, — yet now shall love him more :—
True love of Him begins upon that shore!

So not alone we land upon that shore:
'Twill be as though we had been there before;
We shall meet more we know
Than we can meet below,
And find our rest like some returning dove,
And be at home at once with our eternal love!

F. W. Faber.

NEVER let us forget that constitutional temperament, and the depressing influences of many forms of disease, may make dark and distressful the dying bed of the very best believer. Perhaps, even with true Christians, the death is as the life was; the evening is what the day was, "not clear, nor dark," as the general rule. There are blessed hopes, but there are also distressing fears. "At evening time it shall be light." And shall we say then, that this text does not speak truth? No, far from that. The light *does* come; and

it comes at evening; but evening is the close of day; and the light may perhaps not beam forth until day has entirely closed. Not upon this side of time may the blessed promise find its fulfilment. The foot may be dipped in the chill, dark river before the heavenly light has shone upon the face. The eye may be blind to dearest faces and forms, ere the Sun of Righteousness dawns; as in the natural world the darkest, coldest hour is that before the daybreak. The tongue may never be able to tell surviving loved ones how the shadows fled away when the dark valley was passed, till they have passed through that darkness too. Yes, to the believer, true as that God liveth, "at the evening time there *shall* be light," if not in this world, then in a better. Bowing his head to pass under the dark portal, the believer lifts it up on the other side, in the presence and the light of God. It is but a single step from the darkness of death into the light of immortality; and if the evening should remain gloomy to its very end, all

the brighter will seem the glory when the latest breath has parted. I told you how that Christian poet passed away almost in despair, — how the gloom that overshadowed his spirit endured all but to the end; but even in the last moment there came a wonderful change, and they tell us how even on his dead face there remained, till it was hidden forever, a look of bright, and beautiful, and sudden surprise; the light at evening had been long in coming; but oh, it had come at last!

BOYD.

THOU inevitable day,
When a voice to me shall say,
"Thou must rise and come away.

All thine other journeys past,
Gird thee, and make ready fast
For thy longest and thy last."

Day deep hidden from our sight,
An impenetrable night,
Who may guess of thee aright?

Shall I lay my drooping head
On some loved lap; round my bed
Prayer be made and tears be shed?

Or at distance from mine own,—
Name and kin alike unknown,—
Make my solitary moan?

Little skills it where or how,
If thou comest then or now,
With a smooth or angry brow.

Come thou must, and we must die:
Jesus, Saviour, stand Thou by
When that last sleep seals our eye.

R. C. TRENCH.

THE inexpressibly affectionate looks of the dying fix sometimes a recollection more precious than any treasures. Tender messages to the absent, grateful glances in return for little attentions, the fervent kiss, the sweet, indescribable smile, the grasp of the hand in

the act of departure, — who has not witnessed all these, if he has been often at Christian death-beds?

This dying love for friends reveals itself peculiarly in the desire, the hope, and the assurance of future reunion. It reaches to the dead as well as the surviving, and exults with a peculiar rapture in the approaching meeting with such as stand already on the everlasting shore. A few hours before the death of Luther, he rejoiced in this prospect. "We shall, I think," said he, "be renewed in the other life through Christ, and shall much more perfectly recognize our parents, wives, and children." Melancthon, a few days before his death, told Camerarius that he trusted their friendship should be cultivated and perpetuated in another world.

Recollections of dear departed friends come often with such a vividness, that, looking on, we are almost persuaded to deem them near. The aged Hannah More, in her last distress, stretched out her arms, as if catching at some

object, uttered the name of her deceased sister, cried, "Joy!" and sank into a state from which she never revived.

GEORGE BURGESS.

THE excellent Sir William Forbes, the biographer of Beattie, uttered this: "Tell those," said he, "that are drawing down to the bed of death, from my experience, that it has no terrors; that in the hour when it is most wanted, there is mercy with the Most High; and that some change takes place which fits the soul to meet its God." When the loyal Earl of Derby came to his execution, although he had said, in previous times, that he could die in fight, but knew not how it might be on the scaffold, he now said that he could lay his head on the block as cheerfully as on his pillow. "Let my people know," said the pious Arch-deacon Aylmer, "that their pastor died undaunted, and not afraid of death. I bless my God that I have

no fear, no doubt, no reluctation, but an assured confidence in the sin-overcoming merits of Jesus Christ." So said President Finley, "Give my love to the people of Princeton; tell them that I am going to die, and that I am not afraid of death." "Oh, do not fear to die," said Mrs. East, in dying; "you will find the Word of God sure; all will be fulfilled, and you will find it so." These were the words of Haliburton: "I, a poor, weak, timorous man, once as much afraid of death as any, — I, that have been many years under the terror of death, — come now, in the mercy of God, and by the power of His grace, composedly and with joy to look death in the face."

It often appears that exactly those from whom constitutional courage or philosophic firmness could least be expected, go down into the valley of death with most complete triumph over their past apprehensions. In the recollections of many, some such example of a dying friend will occur with convincing

power and tenderness. They tell us that this absence of fear is no fruit of nature, of habit, or of strenuous effort; but the gift of Him who gave to death its terrors, when He made it the doom of sin; and who takes those terrors away when sin is blotted out through the blood of the Lamb.

GEORGE BURGESS.

OH, it is sweet to think
Of those that are departed,
While murmured Aves sink
To silence tender-hearted;
While tears that have no pain
Are tranquilly distilling,
And the dead live again
In hearts that love is filling.

Yet not as in the days
Of earthly ties we love them;
For they are touched with rays
From light that is above them;
Another sweetness shines
Around their well-known features;

God with His glory signs
  His dearly-ransomed creatures.

Yes, they are more our own
  Since now they are God's only;
And each one that has gone
  Has left our heart less lonely.
He mourns not seasons fled
  Who now in Him possesses
Treasures of many dead
  In their dear Lord's caresses.

Dear dead! they have become
  Like guardian angels to us;
And distant heaven, like home,
  Through them begins to woo us.
Love that was earthly wings
  Its flight to holier places;
The dead are sacred things
  That multiply our graces.

They whom we loved on earth
  Attract us now to heaven;
Who shared our grief and mirth
  Back to us now are given.

They move with noiseless foot
  Gravely and sweetly round us,
And their soft touch hath cut
  Full many a chain that bound us.

O dearest dead! to Heaven
  With grudging sighs we gave you,
To Him! — be doubts forgiven! —
  Who took you there to save you!

FABER.

DEATH has revelations such as this. You who have seen a beloved one die, you are familiar with a transformation that yet did not interfere with his identity — that left him still your own.

You remember well, do you not? the serene radiance of his expression. You beheld his face as it were that of an angel. Such was the aspect Stephen wore, when they stoned him as he knelt, and in the open heavens saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

But when the last breath is drawn, what

dignity, what ineffable serenity! The body had suffered much. It was old, perhaps infirm, very wretched in every way. Death comes, and an ideal youth — the youth of immortality — descends upon the brow.

There are flowers which only yield their fragrance to the night; there are faces whose beauty only fully opens out in death. No more wrinkles; no drawn, distorted lineaments; an expression of extreme humility, blended with gladness of hope; a serene brightness; and an ideal straightening of the outline, as if the Divine Finger, source of supreme beauty, had been laid there. You cannot take your eyes away. Dead, your loved one consoles you for the agony of having seen him suffer. His face, his inexpressible grandeur, his smile, all say to you, "Believe; yet a little while, and thou shalt see me again."

MADAME DE GASPARIN.

IF God has not permitted, between you and the dead, that exchange of thoughts for which you sigh, it is because, if He had, death would not have *been* death. And then we should have made idols of our loved ones.

I know a courier, swift and sure, who will carry us to the absent — Faith. He knows the road: have no fear, he will not stumble nor stray.

For us, in our sorrow, there are promises, and glad intelligence of our dead. God has not shut them up in dark prison-houses. We can turn our eyes to the land they inhabit. No mirage — the country exists. No poet's rapture — the simplest see the clearest.

Gazing on that land, our affections will take new life, and the bitterness of despair will vanish; and when we return to earth, we shall bring back an imperishable joy in our hearts; we shall be faithful to the dead without a murmur of revolt against God; we shall

be grateful without egotism — submissive, not oblivious.

MADAME DE GASPARIN.

"THE loved and lost!" Why do we call them lost,
Because we miss them from our onward road?
God's unseen angel o'er our pathway crossed,
Looked on us all, and, loving them the most,
Straightway relieved them from life's weary load.

They are not lost; they are within the door
That shuts out loss, and every hurtful thing;
With angels bright, and loved ones gone before,
In their Redeemer's presence evermore,
And God himself their Lord, and Judge, and King.

And call we this a loss? Death makes no breach
In love and sympathy, in hope and trust;
No outward sign or sound our ears can reach,
But there's an inward, spiritual speech,
That greets us still, though mortal tongues be dust.

It bids us do the work that they laid down,
Take up the song where they broke off the strain,
So journeying till we reach the heavenly town,
Where are laid up our treasures and our crown,
And our lost loved ones will be found again.

Lyra Cœlestis.

ARE the souls of departed saints, whether dismissed by an immediate or prolonged dissolution, *instantly* with the Lord? I marvel that the question should be for a moment mooted. Who, with an intelligent understanding of God's Word, can reasonably doubt it? I unhesitatingly reply in the affirmative, and proceed briefly to substantiate the truth. Our proposition is, Instant death, instant glory. I maintain, upon the authority, as I humbly believe, of God's Word, that the moment the redeemed spirit is released from the body, it enters upon a state of conscious, intelligent, and inconceivable happiness, — that death is not in any degree an insensible state of the

soul, — a sort of anæsthesia, or trance, or syncope of the spiritual and immortal part of our being. The Scriptures of truth distinctly teach, both directly and inferentially, that the departure of the believer in Jesus is an entrance into a life compared with which his present existence is a lingering death. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." To affirm that a sudden collapse of the vital powers, or the instant rupture of a small vessel in the brain, or an immediate cessation of the heart's action, has arrested in any degree the spiritual powers of the soul, — that the instant disencumberment of the casket has plunged the jewel into a yet deeper solitude and a profounder darkness, is a theory as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural. The *soul* is not a mere appendage to our being, asking of the body leave to live ; nor is the body a necessary part of our immortal existence, apart from which we but dream on in a kind of spiritual coma. No! But the soul is our very being itself, essentially, proudly, sublimely, inde-

pendent of the body. "It is the soul that is *you;* the body is *yours.*" Our bodies, though purchased by the atonement of the Son of God, and inhabited by the Spirit, and destined to a glorious resurrection, are, in their present condition, drags, and not wings, to the soul. In death we lay aside the robes of mortality, as we do at night our outward vesture: and as the soul slumbers not during the suspension of our external senses in sleep, but roams, expands, and expatiates in unknown worlds, proudly maintaining and enjoying its independency of matter, so, when the last link is broken that bound it to earth, it claps its glad pinions and soars to heaven, waking the music of the spheres as it passes. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Our life and immortality are not two distinct things any more than are time and eternity. The one instantly glides into the other. The Christian's life is as a silvery stream pursuing its way through a checkered wilderness, sometimes winding, often cloudy;

but presently leaping from it into a resplendent waterfall, sparkling with a thousand hues, and murmuring the sweetest music; then coursing through an infinitely rich and beautiful country, reflecting in its crystal and serenely gliding depths every object of loveliness it visits. Thus our *future* is but a continuation of our present, in a world more spiritual and genial — more beautiful and sublime. We are not to *be* immortal, — we *are* immortal; so that, when we go hence, we carry with us, without even a momentary suspension, the consciousness, the intelligence, the moral relations, and spiritual character that we now have; only exchanging partial sanctification for complete holiness; an abject for an ennobled being; a limited for a boundless range of thought, and feeling, and action; corruption for incorruption; the image of the earthly for the perfected image of the heavenly.

WINSLOW.

"I SHINE in the light of God;
His image stamps my brow;
Through the shadows of death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now.
No breaking heart is here,
No keen and thrilling pain,
No wasted cheek, where the burning tear
Hath rolled, and left its stain.

"I have found the joys of heaven;
I am one of the angel band;
To my head a crown is given,
And a harp is in my hand;
I have learned the song they sing,
Whom Jesus hath made free,
And the glorious walls of heaven still ring
With my new-born melody.

"No sin, no grief, no pain—
Safe in my happy home;
My fears all fled, my doubts all slain,
My hour of triumph come:

O friends of my mortal years, —
The trusted and the true, —
You're walking still the vale of tears,
But I wait to welcome you.

"Do I forget? Oh, no!
For memory's golden chain
Shall bind my heart to the hearts below,
Till they meet and touch again;
Each link is strong and bright,
While love's electric flame
Flows freely down like a river of light,
To the world from whence I came.

"Do you mourn when another star
Shines out from the glorious sky?
Do you weep when the voice of war
And the rage of conflict die?
Why, then, should your tears roll down,
Or your heart be sorely riven,
For another gem in the Saviour's crown,
And another soul in heaven?"

THAT the end was drawing near, Perthes perfectly knew and openly declared, and he looked forward to it with wonderful composure. To Dörner he wrote, "The consciousness of life being quite over is to me a very peculiar and by no means depressing feeling; rather, on the contrary, exhilarating. I am full of thankfulness to God." Indeed, as far as man could judge, Perthes had not for one moment, during the whole of his illness, to struggle with the fear of death. "God is, for His Son's sake, very gracious to me, a poor sinner," was his constant exclamation in hours of pain. To Neander he wrote, "In hope and faith I am joyfully passing over into the land where truth will be made clear, and love pure." In a letter, written early in April, we find it said, "Perthes is perfectly reconciled to die; he is calm and confident. Whether this present confidence and calm will abide with him during the last struggle, he does not know; for Nature, he says, often asserts her

sway most strongly when just about to lose her power forever; and that, therefore, there may possibly be before him a fearful conflict, a seeming despair, a cry, 'My God! my God! wherefore hast thou forsaken me?' But he hopes for a peaceful, placid falling asleep, and makes it a subject of prayer."

On Thursday, the 18th of May, the doctor was able to tell him that all would soon be over. He had no longer any actual pain, and on being asked whether his dreams were distressing, he answered, "No, no; not now; — once distressing, now delightful." Sometimes he would pray aloud and repeat hymns in a firm voice. But for the most part he lay there peaceful and joyful; and the peace and joy that God had granted him pervaded all that were near. "When he folded his cold hands," wrote one of his daughters, "and prayed from his inmost soul, we too were constrained to fold our hands and pray, it was all so sublime, so blessed; we felt as though our Lord Jesus Christ were with us in the room." "The last

conflict is severe," we find it said in another letter; "but we see with our own eyes that he can overcome it in love, and without pain or fear. The last enemy loses all his terrors for us, and the resurrection seems nearer to us than the death."

About six o'clock in the evening, an intimate friend, the court preacher, Jacobi, came in. Perthes opened his languid eyes, and stretched out his hands to him, saying, "For the last time; it will soon be over, but it is a hard struggle." About seven, Jacobi and the doctor left him; at eight, his breathing became slower and deeper, but without occasioning any distress. His whole family stood round him. Perthes had folded his hands, and for a short time prayed aloud, but his speech had now become inarticulate; only the oft-repeated words, "My Redeemer — Lord — forgiveness," could be distinguished. It had now grown dark. When lights were brought in, a great change was visible in his features; every trace of pain was gone, his eyes shone, his whole

aspect was, as it were, transfigured, so that those around him could only think of his bliss, not of their own sorrow. The last sounds of this world that reached the dying ear were, "Yea, the Lord hath prepared blessedness and joy for thee, where Christ is the Sun, the Life, and the All in All." He drew one long, last breath; like a lightning flash, an expression of agony passed over his face, and then his triumph was complete. It was within a few minutes of half past ten. Immediately after death a look of peace and joy settled on his face. Early on the morning of the 22d of May, he was buried in the churchyard of Gotha, and his favorite hymn was sung around his grave: —

What can molest or injure me, who have in Christ a part?
Filled with the peace and grace of God, most gladly I depart.

Life of Perthes.

'TIS sweet, as year by year we lose
Friends out of sight, in faith to muse
How grows in Paradise our store.

Then pass, ye mourners, cheerly on,
Through prayer unto the tomb,
Still, as ye watch life's falling leaf,
Gathering from every loss and grief
Hope of new spring and endless home.

Then cheerly to your work again,
With hearts new-braced and set
To run, untired, love's blessed race,
As meet for those, who face to face,
Over the grave their Lord have met.

KEBLE.

THE ETERNAL HOME.

There are our loved ones in their rest!
They've crossed Time's river, now no more
They heed the bubbles on its breast,
Nor feel the storms that sweep its shore.
But there pure love can live, can last;—
They look for us their home to share;
When we, in turn, away have passed,
What joyful greetings wait us there,
Beyond the river!

Dublin Univ. Magazine.

THE ETERNAL HOME.

PERHAPS the best illustration of heaven which our earth-life affords to us is the idea of HOME. *Home* embraces all we can conceive of peace, of rest, of joy — the presence of the dear ones whose happiness is interblended with our own, the circle of loving services and devoted uses, with God for its great Head, God's word for its chief guide, the fostering and development of goodness and delight in each other as its prime object. And heaven is the idea of home, extended, as to locality, into everlasting habitations, enlarged, as to inhabitants, till it comprehends all God's children, with its peace intensified till it knows no fear, its joy amplified till every tear shall

be wiped away from the face, its holiness increased till nothing shall hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain, with innumerable multitudes on multitudes as ministers of blessing,—one to all and all to each. All the lingering attachments which bind our heart to home receive grander measure and profounder depth, in proportion as, with our idea of home, we associate the fuller idea of heaven, with God as the universal Father, and the saved as our universal brethren. Arguing from the seen to the unseen, from the known to the unknown, which is the only sound method, the idea of *home*, which we know, will enable us to attain a conception of the *heaven*, which we know not yet. In a sense far deeper than our perceptions previously enable us to utter it, we may say that our "home is in heaven;" for all the various felicities, with which the divine mercy allows our home-life on earth to be environed, are only mundane pictures or emblems of the broader and more bountiful bliss which the same divine mercy has pre-

pared in heaven. Not that the earthly shall be sublimed or intensified into the heavenly; but, with that difference which ever must exist between earth and heaven, the earthly *purest* is still the type of the heavenly *pure*.

Our Eternal Homes.

UPWARD, where the stars are burning,
Silent, silent in their turning
Round the never-changing pole,—
Upward, where the sky is brightest,
Upward, where the blue is lightest,—
Lift I now my longing soul.

Far above that arch of gladness,
Far beyond these clouds of sadness,
Are the many mansions fair.
Far from pain and sin and folly,
In that palace of the holy,—
I would find my mansion there!

Where the glory brightly dwelleth,
Where the new song sweetly swelleth,
And the discord never comes, —
Where life's stream is ever laving,
And the palm is ever waving, —
That must be the Home of homes.

BONAR.

THE supreme joy of paradise will be to adore. It will be to tell over, with a boundlessly expanded comprehension, the sacrifice of Jesus, the love of the Father, the merciful action of the Holy Spirit. "A new earth." What will it be like? I know only that *God's tabernacle will be there*, that He will wipe away our tears, that joy will reign; and I know that it will be forever.

When my eye, as it wanders over the country in summer, beholds it decked with so many charms, although destined to destruction, my thoughts take sudden wing to

that promised land, before whose mysterious adorning will pale all that we now call beauty.

Oh, forests with your fresh coolness; glades with tempered light, filled with winged creatures rejoicing in their life of a day; mountains with grassy summits; majesty of peaks of snow; ineffable charm of the valley; blue lakes, entranced, looking up to and reflecting the sky, — my God made you what you are. It is God who will make the new earth. Our low prose effaces your poetry; the hymn which rises from your solitudes is overpowered by our jarring voices; your flowers pass away; the flowers of Paradise will be sweeter still, and will not fade. But God has prepared still more.

Glory! This is a sublime promise, and I would not be ungrateful for any one of God's gifts. And yet, if I may dare to say so, whether from feebleness of nature, or conscious unworthiness, glory dazzles me, — does not thrill my heart.

A sweeter certainty, a more intimate happiness, fills it with emotion — that of loving.

To love my God. To have some lowly place in heaven, and from thence to see my God, from thence to love him with enlarged capacities, delivered from all my coldness, all my insincerity. To love my friends in God with an affection also enlarged, purified, bright, burning as the sun; no fear of idolatry; no envy to corrode, no selfishness, no deceit.

I have so poorly loved those I loved most! How often my affection has sunk beneath the weight of earthly cares! How often I have mourned my heart's powerlessness to cherish unqualifiedly. I have bruised myself against the limitations of my own love for others, as well as against those of the love of others for me. But now, everywhere there is the Infinite, — in me, around me; infinite tenderness, and this co-existing with infinite purity.

MADAME DE GASPARIN.

MULTITUDES — multitudes stood up in bliss,
Made equal to the angels, glorious, fair;
With harps, palms, wedding garments, kiss of peace,
And crowned and haloed hair.

They sang a song, a new song in the height,
Harping with harps to Him who is strong and true:
They drank new wine, their eyes saw with new light;
Lo! all things were made new.

Glory touched glory on each blesséd head,
Hands locked dear hands never to sunder more:
These were the new-begotten from the dead
Whom the great birthday bore.

Heart answered heart, soul answered soul at rest,
Double against each other, filled, sufficed,
All loving, loved of all; but loving best
And best beloved of Christ.

I saw that one who lost her love in pain,
Who trod on thorns, who drank the loathsome cup;
The lost in night, in day was found again;
The fallen was lifted up.

They stood together in the blesséd noon,
They sang together through the length of days;
Each loving face bent Sunwards like a moon
New lit with love and praise.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

HEAVEN is no place of moping drowsiness, inglorious indolence, sheer idleness and nothingness. Everlasting life is the most blissful life, because it is the most exquisite and perfect life, and hence the most active and energetic life. Man is made for society; it is not good for him to be alone. Solitude for any length of time is a great privation and penalty, sometimes greater than human nature can bear. We are intended for mutual intercourse and social bliss, — made for the happy communion and fellowship of the saints. The heavenly city is our true and proper home, where we shall have pleasures to our tastes, a community exquisitely social, friendships surprisingly tender and affectionate; duties, occu-

pations, essentially active and communicative. What is happiness without union and affection, the tenderness of kindness and good will, the pleasures of society, friendship, and love? Where is heaven without fellows to share it, companions to partake of it? How could we enjoy it without objects of attachment to interest our wishes; links of brotherhood to hold fast our affections, to twine round our hearts; feelings of esteem and endearment to win the mind and to fill the soul? Future bliss, in a great degree, depends on society, — is constituted and consummated by it. All the unnumbered multitudes that throng the countless worlds and labyrinths of worlds of the vast and boundless universe, compose but one body under one head, — are consolidated into one communion and fellowship under Christ the Lord.

Friends will meet their friends in the body again, to recognize each other, and to mingle again in heaven; they will revive old friendships on earth, acknowledge former kindness-

es, and return past favors and benefits in the land of their pilgrimage. How will parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, pastors and their flocks, benefactors and their beneficiaries, meet and be united once more in the closest intimacy of profoundest cordiality, warmest affection, tenderest endearment, to cement more strongly and forever those nearest, dearest ties of love and friendship that death had so long, so cruelly, cut and severed!

Here we are limited in our society, circumscribed in our means of making friends, as well as our opportunities of meeting and associating with them. We can but rarely have the advantage of the social converse and intimacy of those we love, or the mutual communion and fellowship of such as we are assured could instruct and edify us. Occupied in business, perplexed with cares and troubles, oppressed with pain of body, affliction of mind, loss of friends, or of estate, we are deprived of mutual aid, social union, affectionate con-

verse and coöperation. We cannot commune with the companions of our choice, nor meet the friends of our hearts; distance prevents it, circumstances interrupt it, health or means will not admit of it. But in heaven there is neither sorrow nor crying, neither toil nor trouble, neither distraction of business nor opposition of interests. We shall have the blessings of the best society; the happiness of perpetual intimacy; constant, open, unreserved communion with the greatest, wisest, and best of creation; with the members and brethren of Christ; with the hosts and hierarchies of heaven; with God and the Lamb. "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

JOHN WHITLEY.

OH, sweet home-echo on the pilgrim's way!
Thrice welcome message from a land of light,
As through a clouded sky the moonbeams stray,
So on Eternity's deep-shrouded night
Streams a mild radiance from that cheering word,
"So shall we be forever with the Lord."

At home with Jesus! Him who went before,
For His own people mansions to prepare;
The soul's deep longings stilled, its conflicts o'er,
All rest and blessedness with Jesus there,
What home like this can the wide earth afford?
"So shall we be forever with the Lord."

With Him all gathered! to that blessed home,
Through all its windings, still the pathway tends;
While ever and anon bright glimpses come
Of that fair city where the journey ends, —
Where all of bliss is centred in one word,
"So shall we be forever with the Lord."

Here kindred hearts are severed far and wide
By many a weary mile of land and sea,

Or life's all-varied cares and paths divide; —
But yet a joyful gathering shall be, —
The broken links repaired, the lost restored,
"So shall we be forever with the Lord."

O precious promise, mercifully given!
Well may it hush the wail of earthly woe;
O'er the dark passage to the gates of heaven,
The light of hope and resurrection throw.
Thanks for the blesséd life-inspiring word, —
"So shall we be forever with the Lord."

Hymns from the Land of Luther.

WHY may not Moses, and Elijah, and Peter, and James, and John — all of whom were witnesses of the Transfiguration — now, in social intercourse, speak of the time when they met together on the Mount, and were permitted to see their Redeemer's "excellent glory;" a faint shadow of the glory now revealed to them? As memory retraces that heavenly scene, will not their hearts kindle with more fervent love towards Him "who

hath made them kings and priests unto God"? Will they not sing a louder and sweeter strain unto Him who has procured for them an open and abundant entrance into the holy of holies? And will not Peter now exclaim, with more ardent affection and more devout thankfulness to his glorified Master, "Lord, it is good for us to be here"? Can we conceive of any possible obstacle to such a union of pious hearts and holy social intercourse? to such a renewal of earthly recollections? Is there any reason why Paul and Barnabas, and Luke and Timothy, — fellow-laborers on earth, and companions in glory, — should not now review, with gratitude and praise, their common dangers, and trials, and sufferings, in their efforts for the conversion of the heathen world? If not, — and assuredly there is not, — then why may not all pious friends and relatives, who have journeyed together through life's pilgrimage, be permitted to meet at its close, and review the dangers and count up the blessings of the way; and with united hearts and voices, bless

Him who conducted them safely to the haven where they would be? Why may not parents and their children, brothers and sisters, unite once more in the social circle, and send up their anthems of praise for being brought together to this state of glory? Love never faileth; not even when faith is lost in sight, and hope in fruition. In heaven, the love of God and the love of our neighbor will be our highest duty, our highest privilege, our highest joy. And so we trust it will be in reference to those endearments which now constitute the chief charm of life; they will be purified, strengthened, and perpetuated.

"It is yet but a little while," says Melvill, "and we shall be delivered from the burden and the conflict, and, with all those who have preceded us in the righteous struggle, enjoy the deep raptures of a Mediator's presence. Then, reunited to the friends with whom we took sweet counsel upon earth, we shall recount our toil only to heighten our ecstasy, and call to mind the tug and the din of the

war, only that with a more bounding throb, and a richer song, we may feel and celebrate the wonders of redemption."

DORR.

THE Church of Christ is a society which is forever shifting its locality and altering its forms. It is the *whole* church, "the *whole* family in heaven and earth." So, then, those who were on earth, and are now in heaven, are yet members of the same family still. Those who had their home here, now have it there. Let us see what it is that we should learn from this doctrine. It is this — that the dead are not lost to us. There is a sense in which the departed are ours more than they were before. There is a sense in which the Apostle Paul or John, the good and great of ages past, belong to this age more than to that in which they lived, but in which they were not understood; in which the commonplace and every-day part of their lives hindered

the brightness and glory and beauty of their character from shining forth. So it is in the family. It is possible for men to live in the same house, and partake of the same meal from day to day, and from year to year, and yet remain strangers to each other, mistaking each other's feelings, not comprehending each other's character; and it is only when the Atlantic rolls between them, and half a hemisphere is interposed, that we learn how dear they are to us; how all our life is bound up in deep anxiety with their existence. Therefore it is the Christian feels that the family is not broken. Think you that family can break or end? that because the chair is empty, therefore he, your child, is no more? It may be so with the coarse, the selfish, the unbelieving, the superstitious; but the eye of Faith sees there only a transformation. He is not there, he is risen. You see the place where he was, but he has passed to heaven. So at least the parental heart of David felt of old, "by faith and not by sight," when speaking

of his infant child. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

F. W. Robertson.

WE must not doubt, or fear, or dread,
That love for life is only given,
And that the calm and sainted dead
Will meet estranged and cold in heaven:
Oh, love were poor and vain indeed,
Based on so harsh and stern a creed.

True that this earth must pass away,
With all the starry worlds of light,
With all the glory of the day,
And calmer tenderness of night;
For in that radiant home can shine
Alone the immortal and divine.

Earth's lower things, — her pride, her fame,
Her science, learning, wealth, and power, —
Slow growths that through long ages came,
Or fruits of some convulsive hour,
Whose very memory must decay, —
Heaven is too pure for such as they.

They are complete; their work is done;
  So let them sleep in endless rest:
Love's life is only here begun,
  Nor is nor can be fully blest;
It has no room to spread its wings
Amid this crowd of meaner things.

Just for the very shadow thrown
  Upon its sweetness here below,
The cross that it must bear alone,
  And bloody baptism of woe,
Crowned and completed through its pain,
We know that it shall rise again.

So, if its flame burn pure and bright
  Here, where our air is dark and dense,
And nothing in this world of night
  Lives with a living so intense, —
When it shall reach its home at length,
How bright its light! how strong its strength!

And while the vain, weak loves of earth
  (For such base counterfeits abound)

Shall perish with what gave them birth, —
Their graves are green and fresh around,
No funeral song shall need to rise
For the true love that never dies.

If in my heart I now could fear
That, risen again, we should not know
What was our life of life when here, —
The hearts we loved so much below, —
I would arise this very day,
And cast so poor a thing away.

But love is no such soulless clod:
Living, perfected it shall rise,
Transfigured in the light of God,
And giving glory to the skies:
And that which makes this life so sweet
Shall render heaven's joy complete.

A. A. Procter.

WE must think of heaven as an existing reality. It is that which we should bring near to ourselves, for our brethren and

our kinsmen, sainted and glorified in heaven, have their present beatitudes, their present splendors, their present songs. Let us think of them, therefore, as only separated from us by a veil, and as absolutely and truly thinking and feeling as any of ourselves. But that veil will soon be torn aside; we shall soon ourselves have entered that region of spirits. Will there be those who shall be ready to welcome us? Shall there be those whom we ourselves can remember? This is not a barren speculation; it is that which surely has engaged every thinking mind and every susceptible heart.

To prove how disinterested were the spirit and purpose of the first Christian teachers, they always rested their labors upon a reward: they did not deny that they contemplated a reward, and a reward full and comprehensive; but it was a reward, not of this world, not of its withering palms or its uncertain riches: it was a reward which consisted in the conversion, in the salvation, and in the glory of

those spirits whom they had instrumentally rescued and saved. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy. That I may rejoice in the day of the Lord that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain. Look to yourselves that ye receive a full reward. That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Now all this, surely, is confirmation strong, the confirmation of Holy Writ, that the apostles anticipated a reward, and that that reward cannot for a moment be separated from the recognition of those who were the fruits of their ministry, and the seals of their zeal.

But when it is necessary to insinuate kindly and soothing solace more distinctly and more impressively into the mind, the veil is raised, the eternal world is developed. "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if

we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord."

Now, granting that the doctrine is rather assumed in Scripture than stated and illustrated, yet as all was truly implied, what testimony can be more distinct, what evidence more perfect, than that which we have now cited in your ears?. When, standing near the grave of Bethany, our Lord says, "Believest thou this?" and when, more directly, "Thy brother shall rise again," was it that that brother was to be absorbed and lost in the

myriads and the millions of spirits, so that the sisters, who had lately laid him in the grave, should see him and know him no more?

HAMILTON.

OH, talk to me of heaven! I love
To hear about my home above;
For there doth many a loved one dwell
In light and joy ineffable.
Oh, tell me how they shine and sing,
While every harp rings echoing;
And every glad and tearless eye
Beams like the bright sun, gloriously
Tell me of that victorious palm
Each hand in glory beareth;
Tell me of that celestial calm
Each face in glory weareth.

O happy, happy country! where
There entereth not a sin!
And Death, who keeps its portals fair,
May never once come in.

No grief can change their day to night—
The darkness of that land is light.
Sorrow and sighing God hath sent
Far thence to endless banishment.

O happy, happy land! in thee
Shines the unveiled Divinity,
Shedding through each adoring breast
A holy calm, a halcyon rest.
And those blest souls whom death did sever,
Have met to mingle joys forever.
Oh, soon may heaven unclose to me!
Oh, may I soon that glory see!
And my faint, weary spirit stand
Within that happy, happy land.

BOWLES.

THE spirits of the just in heaven, though represented as waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of the body, are represented likewise as already "made perfect." Absent from the body, they are present with the Lord. And this expression gives us that

notion of heaven which is at once most intelligible and most delightful. When straining our eyes to discern some of the forms which characterize heavenly things, and our ears to discern some of the notes of heavenly music, and our minds to understand the new relations and fellowships of God and His Saints, we find a resting-place to our jaded spirits in the words, so familiar to us, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." What more would we have? When shrinking from the unknown, the mysterious future, is it not enough to be assured that we are going to Christ, that we shall be with Christ? In His Name is comprehended everything that is attractive to our renewed hearts, everything that can inspire confidence, everything to banish fear. No storm ever raged on earth which He had not

power, even in the days of His humiliation, to quell; no danger from which He could not deliver; no good which He could not bestow. His presence was the pledge of safety even in the tempest; it was the pledge of life even in the chamber of death; it was the pledge of peace and joy amid distress and disease. All this, while yet he wore the garb of a servant, and submitted to hunger, and thirst, and weariness on earth. What must His presence be in heaven! It must be heaven itself. "Present with the Lord!" — no affection of the soul can turn back on itself, pained that it can find no object worthy of it; no want of the soul can be unsatisfied. In His presence our spirits, with the most enlarged capacities and desires, shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, for He shall feed them, and lead them to fountains of living water.

These views should comfort us greatly concerning the dead who have died in the Lord. They are not lost, but gone before. We are on the dark side of death, they are on its

bright side. If we weep, it should be for ourselves, not for them. The change which has passed upon them has translated them from a sorrowful to a sorrowless condition. They have attained the very end for which an earthly life was given them, even fitness and ripeness for a heavenly, — the completing and perfecting of character. They have reached the shore of the promised land, while we are still on the billows of this restless and dangerous life. They are now with Him, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

J. KENNEDY.

THAT clime is not like this dull clime of ours;
All, all is brightness there;
A sweeter influence breathes around its flowers,
And a benigner air.
No calm below is like that calm above,
No region here is like that realm of love;
Earth's softest spring ne'er shed so soft a light,
Earth's brightest summer never shone so bright.

That sky is not like this sad sky of ours,
Tinged with earth's change and care;
No shadow dims it, and no rain-cloud lowers,
No broken sunshine there:
One everlasting stretch of azure pours
Its stainless splendor o'er those sinless shores:
For there Jehovah shines with heavenly ray,
And Jesus reigns, dispensing endless day.

The dwellers there are not like those of earth;
No mortal stain they bear;
And yet they seem of kindred blood and birth:
Whence, and how came they there?
Earth was their native soil; from sin and shame,
Through tribulation, they to glory came;
Bond-slaves, delivered from sin's crushing load;
Brands plucked from burning by the hand of God.

Yon robes of theirs are not like those below;
No angel 's half so bright:
Whence came that beauty, whence that living glow?
And whence that radiant white?
Washed in the blood of the atoning Lamb,
Fair as the light these robes of theirs became;

And now, all tears wiped off from every eye,
They wander where the freshest pastures lie,
Through all the nightless day of that unfading sky,

BONAR.

"YE shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God." If you see them without recognizing them, what does seeing them signify to you?

A crown of rejoicing is prepared for the Apostle of the Gentiles; his converts are that crown. But if he does not know them again, what becomes of his triumph? "Make to yourselves *friends* of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." *Friends*, the very same whose trembling hands your hands have pressed, whose tears you have dried here below. If they are merely X, Y, or Z, why, they can no longer be friends, and Scripture testimony is overthrown.

On the morning of the resurrection many

saints left their graves, and showed themselves to many. Do away with the recognition of individuals, and you destroy all proof of the miracle.

Upon the holy mountain there appeared two men in glory, one on each side of the transfigured Saviour. Who has announced their names to Peter? No one; nor had Peter ever seen them; yet he knows them. "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, one for Elias."

I thank Thee, my God, the river of Lethe may indeed flow through the Elysian Fields; it does not water the Christian's Paradise.

MADAME DE GASPARIN.

YES, we shall see God, and my soul leaps at the thought; yes, we shall taste of peace, that here our agitated hearts can never know; yes, we shall adore, sing marvellous hymns, and our bosoms palpitate with

joy; yes, we shall adore, we shall glorify God; but contemplation, repose, celestial concerts, love, and adoration, — you shall be a life, not an absorption.

God's Paradise, I know the borders of it, and from these borders emerge so many genial rays of warmth as well as light, that my heart burns within me. In His Paradise I find myself perfected, sanctified with all my soul, my affections, my memories. His Paradise, oh, it is simple as it is splendid; more grand, yet nearer to me; life in its personality, and personality in its perfect harmony with God. It is my native country, not a foreign land; it is the house of my Father, not the temple of an abstract Divinity. I do not see an indistinguishable throng of phantoms; I meet brothers and dear friends. Such is the happiness my nature craves. To such a country I desire to emigrate; the remotest view of it sustains my courage. There I shall repose, as one reposes in the house of a father.

MADAME DE GASPARIN.

BUT we, when life grows dim,
When its last melodies float o'er our way,
Its changeful hues before us faintly swim,
Its flitting lights decay;

Even though we bid farewell
Unto the Spring's blue skies and budding trees,
Yet may we lift our hearts in hope to dwell
'Midst brighter things than these;

And think of deathless flowers,
And of bright streams to glorious valleys given,
And know the while how little dreams of ours
Can shadow forth of heaven.

The Antique Sepulchre.

IF the mere conception of the reunion of good men in a future state infused a momentary rapture into the mind of Tully; if an airy speculation — for there is reason to

fear it had little hold on his convictions — could inspire him with such delight, what may we be expected to feel who are assured of such an event by the *true sayings* of God! How should we rejoice in the prospect — the certainty, rather — of spending a blissful eternity with those whom we loved on earth; of seeing them emerge from the ruins of the tomb, and the deeper ruins of the fall, not only uninjured, but refined and perfected, "with every tear wiped from their eyes," standing before the throne of God and the Lamb in white robes, and palms in their hands, crying, with a loud voice, "Salvation to God, that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" What delight will it afford to renew the sweet counsel we have taken together, to recount the toils of combat and the labor of the way, and to approach, not the house, but the throne, of God in company, in order to join in the symphonies of heavenly voices, and lose ourselves

amid the splendors and fruitions of the beatific vision!

To that state, all the pious on earth are tending; and if there is a law, from whose operation none are exempt, which irresistibly conveys their bodies to darkness and to dust, there is another, not less certain or less powerful, which conducts their spirits to the abodes of bliss, — to the bosom of their Father and their God. The wheels of nature are not made to roll backward; everything presses on towards eternity. From the birth of time an impetuous current has set in, which bears all the sons of men towards that interminable ocean. Meanwhile heaven is attracting to itself whatever is congenial to its nature, is enriching itself by the spoils of earth, and collecting within its capacious bosom whatever is pure, permanent, and divine, leaving nothing for the last fire to consume but the objects and the slaves of concupiscence; while everything which grace has prepared and beautified shall be gathered and selected from the

ruins of the world to adorn that Eternal City, which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

ROBERT HALL.

THE anticipated heaven of the Christian differs from the anticipated heaven of any other man, not in the distinctness with which its imagery is perceived, but in the kind of objects which are hoped for. The Apostle has told us the character of heaven. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him;" which glorious words are sometimes strangely misinterpreted, as if the Apostle meant merely rhetorically to exalt the conception of the heavenly world, as of something beyond all power to imagine or to paint. The Apostle meant something infinitely deeper.

The heaven of God is not only that which "eye hath not seen," but that which eye can never see; its glories are not of that kind at all which can ever stream in forms of beauty on the eye, or pour in melody upon the enraptured ear, — not such joys as genius in its most gifted hour (here called "the heart of man") can invent or imagine: it is something which these sensuous organs of ours never can appreciate — bliss of another kind altogether, revealed to the spirit of man by the Spirit of God — joys such as spirits alone can receive.

F. W. Robertson.

WHAT must it be to dwell above,
At God's right hand, where Jesus reigns,
Since the sweet earnest of His love
O'erwhelms us on these dreary plains!
No heart can think, no tongue explain,
What bliss it is with Christ to reign.

When sin no more obstructs our sight,
When sorrow pains our heart no more,
How shall we view the Prince of Light,
And all His works of grace explore?
What heights and depths of love divine
Will there through endless ages shine!

Well, He has fixed the happy day
When the last tears shall wet our eyes,
And God shall wipe those tears away,
And fill us with divine surprise
To hear His voice, and see His face,
And feel His infinite embrace!

This is the heaven I long to know!
For this with patience I would wait,
Till, weaned from earth and all below,
I mount to my celestial seat,
And wave my palm, and wear my crown,
And, with the elders, cast them down.

SWAIN.

WE think of gathering together "in a great multitude;" of standing in a throng, worshipping in a temple; of always beholding the Saviour; of always standing near to him in place; of being literally, and in the narrowest sense, locally, "*with Christ*," forever. Now, unquestionably, these, and the like expressions, being scriptural, are most valuable, and in many ways helpful to our languid conceptions. But they are very capable of narrow and poor interpretation. Holding by them in their literality, we find our ideas contracting. We need the corrective and expansive influence of those other expressions — also scriptural — which carry our thoughts away beyond all narrow limits into the vastness and variousness of celestial life, — "In my Father's house are many mansions."

Out of the idea of vastness arises, almost necessarily, the idea of an endless variety. At least, it is so in this world. And surely

we must not think of heaven as less than earth. The variety existing in God's works here is one of the principal charms of the natural world. Not two faces in all the world, nor two trees, nor two flowers, nor two blades of grass, could be pronounced exactly alike. Then, I think, we are almost bound to apply the analogy to the future life, and to believe that as there are "many mansions," so the furnishing and adorning of them will be very various. One will not be as another. There will not only be *room* for all, but *interest* for all. We do not go to heaven to lose our natural tastes, our sinless preferences, our peculiar desires; but rather to have all these drawn out, exercised, gratified, in a far higher degree. Would you think of the "many mansions" — that is, of vast realms of celestial space — as filled up only with *one kind* of life? Then it would follow that heaven is to be a plainer, and a poorer, and a less interesting place than this earth. And unless our own nature were pressed down into some kind

of mechanical exactness and shape, weariness would ensue. There would be a sighing for the lost seasons of the earth, and for its withered flowers, and for its light and shade, and for its many countries, and for its encircling seas. But no! there will be places, pursuits, occupations, and enjoyments for all. The "many mansions," we may be sure, contain many, many modes, and ways, and powers, and possibilities, and scenes — all united by a principle of sacred harmony, and yet furnishing endless and beautiful exemplifications of the beneficent law of *variety*, which, in so far as our observation extends, pertains to all the works of God.

"If it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you." Precious words! Let every mourner cling to them as the very tie that binds him, with inseparable links, to the dearest of his vanished friends. Let every unwilling sceptic take them as God's provided salvation from his doubts. Let every heaven-bound pilgrim see them,

written as with the first golden beams of the morning, always on the farthest horizon of his view. And let those who feel that their pilgrimage is drawing to a close, and who look wistfully, and sometimes in vain, for a clear outline of the better country to which they are going, *rest themselves* on such a text as this, until strength is recruited, and the clouds pass over, and they can "go on their way"—if not "rejoicing," at least in peace.

ALEXANDER RALEIGH.

HOW many graves around us lie!
How many homes are in the sky!
Yes, for each saint doth Christ prepare
A place with care:
Thy Home is waiting, brother, there!

F. SACHSE.

AND now, Lord, what pure and resplendent light is this in which Thy blessed ones dwell! How justly did Thine Apostle call it the inheritance of the saints in light — light inexpressible, light inconceivable, light inaccessible! So Thou, who hast prepared such a light to this inferior world, for the use and comfort of us mortal creatures, as the glorious sun, which can both enlighten and dazzle the eyes of all beholders, hast proportionally ordained a light to that higher world, so much more excellent than the sun, as heaven is above earth, immortality above corruption.

If, even in Thine eyes, Thy poor despised church upon earth be so beautiful and amiable, — "fair as the moon, clear as the sun," — which yet, in the eyes of flesh, seems but homely and hard-favored, what infinite graces and perfections shall our spiritual eyes behold in Thy glorified spouse above? what pure sanctity, what sincere charity, what clear

knowledge, what absolute joy, what entire union, what wonderful majesty, what complete felicity! All shine alike in their essential glory, but in different degrees. All are adorned with crowns, some also with coronets; some glitter with a sky-like, others with a star-like, clearness. The least hath so much as to make him so happy that he would not wish to have more; the greatest hath so much that he cannot receive more.

Oh, divine distribution of bounty, where there is no possibility of want or of envy! Oh, transcendent royalty of the saints! One heaven is more than a thousand kingdoms, and every saint hath right to all. Every subject is here a sovereign; and every sovereign is absolute, under the free homage of an infinite Creator. So here, crowns without cares, sceptre without burden, rule without trouble, reigning without change. Oh, the transitory vanity of all earthly greatness! Gold is the most durable metal; yet even that yields to age. Solomon's rich diadem of the pure gold of Ophir

is long since dust. These crowns of glory are incorruptible, beyond all the compass of time, without all possibility of alteration. Oh, the passing and unsatisfying contentments of earth! How many poor great ones below have that which they call honor and riches, and enjoy them not; and if they have enjoyed them, complain of satiety and worthlessness! Lo here, a free scope of perfect joy, of constant blessedness, without mixture, without intermission. Each one feels his own joy, feels each other's; all rejoice in God, with a joy unspeakable and full of glory, and most sweetly bathe themselves in a pure and complete blissfulness. This very sight of blessed souls is happiness; but oh, for the fruition!

BISHOP HALL.

NOT *now*, my child: a little more rough tossing,
A little longer on the billows' foam,
A few more journeyings in the desert darkness,
And *then* the sunshine of thy Father's home!

One little hour! — and then the glorious crowning, —
The golden harp-strings and the victor's palm!
One little hour! — and then the Hallelujah, —
Eternity's long, deep, thanksgiving psalm!

C. P.

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